FIELD AFAR STORIES

FIRST VOLUME

QUEEN OF APOSTLES, PRAY FOR US!

(Photograph sent by Fr. Fraser, China)

FIELD AFAR STORIES

VOLUME I

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✠ John Cardinal Farley

Archbishop of New York

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Dedicated to

His Eminence, the late John Cardinal Farley,
a loving father and
a generous protector
to Maryknoll

SAN MIN'S TREASURE.

A Story for Little Folks and Big Ones Too.

By One Who Loves Them Both.

PERHAPS you think it would be great fun to have a boat for a house; to spend all your days on the water, watching the sea-birds circling in the air or hovering over their nests in the marshes; to fish when you feel like it, and, on days when you have been 'extra' good, to hunt, with your father, for wild birds' eggs in the sea-grasses and on the rocky cliffs!

But strangely enough, *San Min* didn't enjoy it in the least. Like his little American cousins he was always longing for something else. His father was a comorant fisher, and his grandfather, and his ancestors way, way back, had been fishermen too, and the *Min* family had lived for generations in the same old, rickety house-boat where San was born.

San had heard much of the country beyond the river, of its wonderful buildings and temples, and of the gay shops and processions, from his father, who regularly took fish, pheasants and eggs to the great houses in the city. But he had never been on shore in his ten years of life. Small wonder that he was restless and eager to see the marvels of which he had heard!

One morning, very early, just as the sun was peeping over the horizon, *San's* father awakened him and told him to dress quickly for he was going at last to the land of his dreams. *San* scrambled into his clothes and was so excited that he scarcely touched his bowl of rice.

An hour's row in the flat-boat brought them to the city, and the never-to-be-forgotten day began. It was a festival day—the Feast of Lanterns—that day when all China goes abroad and hails his fellow-man, be he beggar or prince, as comrade, in much the same way as we do at Halloween.

The narrow streets were brilliant with gorgeous hangings, and the picturesque lanterns strung in every possible place swayed back and forth in the gentle breeze that made the day's heat tolerable. And such a clatter! *San* thought the children on the house-boats and the wild birds

screaming over the water made noise enough—but here everybody was talking at once, and everybody seemed to be in every other body's way. It was all so new and wonderful to our river-boy that his bright, brown eyes danced and shone in bewilderment, and more than once he rubbed them to see if he was awake or dreaming.

Mr. *Min,* familiar with such things, guided his little son safely through the crowds till the last pheasant had been delivered—and then, as *San* was to have a real holiday, they sought the places where the jugglers and tumblers were performing in the streets before admiring crowds.

As *San* trudged along, gazing about and wondering where so many bright and beautiful things had come from, his attention was caught by two strange-looking, sweet-faced women, dressed in a most extraordinary fashion. They smiled at the inquisitive little face, and when they passed, *San* turned to look after them. As he did so he noticed that they had dropped something, and—as all Chinese children are polite—he ran after them to pick it up. What he found was a little black cross, with a figure on it, which interested him so much, that he quite forgot the Sisters—of course you and I have guessed that they were Sisters—until his father, fearful lest he had been

lost in the crowd, found him. He then recalled his intention to return the article, but the Sisters were nowhere to be seen.

The Chinese are proverbially honest—and *San* made up his mind with all the resolution of his ten years, to find the owners and give the cross back. Then for safe-keeping he tucked the new-found treasure inside his third kimono. (He wore only four!)

The rest of the day passed all too quickly for *San;* but good things must end, and as the lanterns were lighted, till the air seemed filled with fiery creatures and rare flowers, and the masqueraders came forth for the evening's fun, the faithful old boat bore *San* and his father back to the house on the river.

That night the crucifix was hidden away with his other treasures,—fish-hooks, shot, tops and the knife he used when he went hunting on the cliffs,—and the tired child went to sleep with visions of all that had happened.

For three years *San* did not leave the river, but as he fished or hunted or worked about the house the happy memories of the bright city and its delights helped to while away the long hours, and he spent much time wondering how he could fulfil his obligation to return the little cross.

LITTLE SAN MINS OF CHINA.

(Photograph sent by Ez. Fleuweau, Canton, China)

Every day he would take it out and examine it. What did it mean? Who was the man on it? Why was he nailed to the cross? How hard it must be to die that way! And sometimes the little fellow would stretch himself out—like this Man on the cross—and try to think how it would feel. Surely the man must have been very wicked! But he didn't look so! And *San* found himself loving the cross for very pity of the suffering figure on it! Some will say it was because he found the cross that he treasured it, but you and I know that God in His wonderful way was pouring grace into *San's* sweet soul. At any rate, after a time the boy kept the cross with him always, for it seemed to him that he found the best eggs and caught the most fish when he had it.

There were many other house-boats on the river besides the one in which the *Mins* lived—hundreds of them in fact, enough to make a real city—and they were so close together in some places that they bumped against one another.

San had hardly passed his thirteenth year when a terrible plague broke out. Death hovered over the city, and from the crowded boats along the

river it reaped a frightful harvest each day and night.

Poor little *San!* He woke one morning to find that after a few days' illness his father and mother had left him. Never would they speak to him again,—never caress him! A neighbor came in and together they lowered all that the child loved in the world,—into the river that had harbored them so long!

Heart-breaking days followed for little *San.* His only comfort seemed to come from the cross which he still carried in his pocket. He was glad that his own parents had died quietly at home—and had not been nailed to a cross. He could never have stood that! But he was a brave boy,—and though the tears fell, he did not lose courage.

Left alone, *San* took up his father's work—and started one day for the city. He did not realize that the shadow of death was there too, —that he would see no gay decoration, no lanterns, but in their stead, closed windows and silent streets with only an occasional sober-faced man or weeping woman, to be met!

He was dismayed—where had all the splendor gone! Downcast, he was about to return—for even the river was brighter than this dark place—

when he saw in the distance the white-robed figures he remembered so well. He had the cross with him and now was the time to give it back.

Running as fast as his little legs—and a small basket of fish and eggs—would permit, he overtook them. Breathlessly he told the story of this cross,—how he had found it—and kept it for them. Sister Claire, one of the two Sisters, recognized the crucifix with delight and both at once made friends with *San,* who found himself accompanying them from house to house, as if he belonged to their service. He watched their every movement, their nursing here, baptizing there, comforting everywhere—and asked why they had not come to the river-house to save his mother and father and help all the friends so dear to him. A weary smile came over Sister Claire's face as she said, "Little *San,* there are only six of us in this crowded city and our hearts are always sad, in times like this, because we can do so little for the souls that we have come to save." *San* didn't understand what this meant and he asked, " Why aren't there more of you? We need you. Can't you get some others? They could have my boat for a house! " So he plied them with questions, but they could only

say, "There are more, many, many more who could come and would, if they knew how badly we need them. We will ask our God—the Man on the Cross—to send them."

By this time they had reached the orphanage, where *San* saw many children. Some were blind and crippled and sick,—but all seemed happy. *San's* basket of fish and eggs made a great feast for the sick ones—for during the plague, the hungry days were many. After the meal, which *San* helped to serve, Sister Claire told him the story of the Cross, till the tears rolled down his cheeks.

Tears from this little 'heathen'! for Christ on the Cross! And you and I who know Him so well and possess Him so intimately hardly give Him a thought—much less a tear!

San went home with the Cross—his very own now—and he slept with it tightly clasped in his little brown hand.

He visited the orphanage again and again, always taking some food to the Sisters, who in turn taught him those prayers our mothers taught us when we were just able to lisp—and at last he was baptized and allowed to receive the Body of his crucified Lord.

San grew to be a fine man—strong in heart

and soul and body. He was not called to the sublime dignity of the priesthood, but he remained in the world, to make it sweeter and purer for those who came under the influence of his gracious, generous heart. Through him many of the river-people were brought into the fold, and the Sisters at the orphanage always called him "their little apostle, *'San-of-the-Cross.'*"

The cross brought *San* to God, as it will us, if we love it as he did. It taught him to love others. It will do likewise for thousands if it can be brought to their notice.

But this requires activity on the part of Christians. If we who have already gathered the fruit of Christ's sacrifice, will make an effort to share this blessing with others, many a little *San Min* will be modelled according to the Stature of Him who was crucified for love of all.

THE FRUIT OF THE WISTARIA.

By Victoria A. Larmour.

T'S perfectly absurd! And we simply *can't* let you go, that's all!"

"But I've everything arranged already. It's too late to change my mind now."

"Nonsense! It's *never* too late. Put it off, at least for a while. Don't spoil my splendid house party. Think of the gala time we'd have,—with all the old girls from St. Catherine's and Cousin Joe, who's coming back from California. You know, he's never forgotten you. Better join the party, dearie. Perhaps you'll change your mind about crossing the Pacific," said Kitty with one of her most mischievous smiles.

"Oh! I see there's method in your madness," answered Mary with a laugh. "You're a dear to be planning to give me a good time, but I've already told you that I can't change my plans now."

"Well, you *are* the most obstinate little crank I ever saw, when you once get something into your head. And of all absurd ideas! Here you are, Mary Angela White, twenty-one years old, mistress of the finest mansion on the Boulevard, with enough money to turn any other girl's head. And *now,* the moment you can say you *own* it all, out you come with the placid announcement that you're going to leave it. I say it's nonsense."

"But, Kitty, I've always told you I didn't care about the money."

"That's nonsense, too. But supposing you don't, why can't you stay at home and keep on doing good with your money, as you have done already? There's so much you could do right here at home. We need you here, Mary."

"Yes, that's the hardest part,—leaving the Guild and the Little Sisters and their orphans; but there are others here to help them, while I feel it is God's will that *I* should go." The simple earnestness of these last words silenced Kitty. She did not know how to answer them. She felt that no answer could be made, and that was a feeling that Kitty rarely experienced.

"To me it's the most natural thing in the

world," continued Mary. "It's what I have wanted to do ever since I was a little girl.

"You remember, of course, that when I entered St. Catherine's, I had just returned with my father from China, where we had lived eight years. I was only seven years old when we went there. Father, being sent to look after the interests of the Company, decided to take us with him, in the hope that the warm, dry Eastern climate would be beneficial to my mother, who was in very delicate health.

"At first we lived in an American hotel in Pekin, but there were no other children there and I was dreadfully lonesome. A few months later Father rented a little house in the quaint old village of Nam-san. In the beginning I was just as lonely at Nam-san as I had been in Pekin, though my good French nurse, Henriette, did her best to amuse me.

"She often walked with me to the top of the little hill just back of our house. On one of these occasions, while I was wandering around in search of flowers, I saw a little Chinese girl a short distance away, also gathering flowers. Oh! how I longed to talk to her and play with her, but I knew that she would not understand me. I felt lonelier than I ever had before. I

threw myself on the grass, and wept and sobbed till I thought my little heart would break. Then I felt some one touch my shoulder. I looked up and saw the little Chinese girl with a great bunch of flowers in her arms. She gave me half, meanwhile talking very rapidly. I could understand only a few phrases, which I had caught from the conversation of the servants at home. I knew that she was speaking about the flowers, and I thought she kept repeating something which sounded like Marie or Mary. I wondered if she could know that my name was Mary.

"By this time I had dried my tears and began to examine my little friend. The first thing which caught my eye was a little white cord which hung around her neck like a necklace, and from which was suspended—a crucifix! In my astonishment I dropped the flowers I had in my hand. The little girl sensed the cause of my surprise, for, holding her own worn, brass crucifix to my lips, she reverently knelt and kissed the little gold cross I always wore. I put my arms around her and kissed her over and over again.

"Then she drew out a scapular from under the folds of her dress, showed me the picture of Mary and pointed from that to the flowers, back

again to the Madonna and then to the little Mission Chapel in the village below. I understood that the flowers were for Mary's shrine. I recalled that Henriette had told me that morning that it was the first day of May and that she had fixed up a tiny shrine in my room, as she had done each year before. I tried to make the little girl understand that I, too, wanted to carry my flowers to the chapel.

"Taking her by the hand, I pulled her along with me, running as fast as I could toward the place where I had left Henriette. Oh! the joy of romping about with another little child! I can never express the happiness of those few moments. Our running apparently wakened Henriette from a nap, for she looked up at us in a dazed, sleepy manner. I rushed up to her and breathless with excitement, explained how I had met the little girl, that she was a Catholic and that we were both going to take our flowers to the Mission Chapel to place them on Mary's altar.

"'Mon Dieu!' cried Henriette, raising her eyes to Heaven. Overcome with emotion, she forgot her aversion to the Chinese and took the little girl in her arms, alternately kissing the child and the crucifix that she wore.

"'Mon Dieu!' repeated Henriette in her native French, 'we are all sisters, all children of Mary,—I from far-off Brittany, you from America, and this little one in her native China. Come, let us all take some flowers to our Blessed Mother.'

"We started at once; but when we had reached the foot of the hill, Henriette was too tired to walk any further. She insisted upon going to the house first to rest awhile.

"I was overjoyed at the prospect of introducing my new friend to my mother, who was even more astonished and impressed than Henriette had been. Tears filled her eyes, she kissed us both, and then told us to go out into the garden and gather all the white wistaria we could, to take to Mary's shrine. Now, the white wistaria in our garden was of a choice variety,—rare even in China and prized for its delicate perfume. The little girl knew this, and glowed with delight as she culled each new cluster.

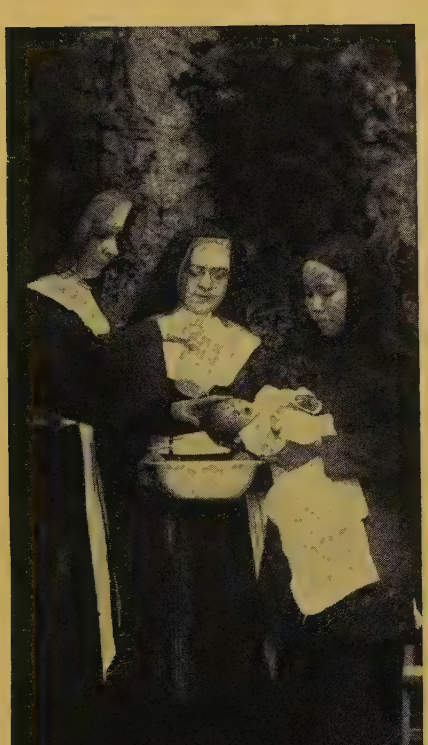
"We gathered as much as we could carry and then made our way, with Henriette, to the Mission. There the three of us arranged masses of these exquisite blossoms, so that the shabby wooden pedestal was entirely concealed and the little statue of the Immaculate Conception seemed

to rest upon a bed of flowers, whose purity and fragrance breathed a silent prayer to her heavenly throne.

"I am always impressed when I recall that scene where we three,—daughters of three different continents,—joined in honoring the good Mother whom Christ bestowed upon mankind.

"Marie Thérèse Woo Feng—for such was the little girl's name—became my daily companion. Through her I learned enough Chinese to carry on an ordinary conversation. I learned much about her country and its people, and also the story of her life, for unlike most little girls of ten, Marie Thérèse had a history. At the time that I met her, she was living with an aged Christian widow in Nam-san. It was the good French missioner who, about two years before, had fulfilled the widow's desire to have some one to keep her company, by bringing her Marie Thérèse Woo Feng from the orphanage of the Sisters of Charity in Pekin. The Sisters had rescued the child, when she was but two or three days old, from the gutter of an obscure street in the great capital where, like so many other infant girls, she had been exposed to die.

"During the seven years that we remained in Nam-san, Marie Thérèse and I were constant



FIRST FRUITS IN CHINA.
(Photograph from Immaculate Conception Nuns, Canton)

companions. One of our favorite pastimes was to 'play Sister of Charity,' which consisted of fashioning a white bonnet from a towel or handkerchief, and then going about rescuing babies,—our dolls having been previously left in obscure spots in the fields or gardens. Every month of May we surrounded the Blessed Mother with masses of the pure, fragrant white wistaria and prayed her to ask the good Jesus to make us Sisters of Charity when we grew up.

"We were very happy together. Nothing troubled me until my mother became very ill. The dry, warm air had benefited her during the first few years, but the effect had not been lasting and gradually she grew weaker and weaker, until she quietly passed away, the good French missioner at her bedside. Oh! how thankful I was that Mother could speak French! I shuddered to think what death would have been for Father, who knew no French, and who could nowhere have found an English-speaking missioner to administer the Sacraments.

"As Father could not be reconciled to burying the body of his loved one in a foreign land, we started on a long, mournful journey across an ocean and a continent. Henriette consoled me as best she could and tried to please me in every

way, even transporting across those thousands of miles several slips of my mother's cherished white wistaria, which we planted tenderly and carefully in the long-disused conservatory of our old home.

"Soon Father sent me to St. Catherine's. Meanwhile his health failed rapidly, and then, in my senior year, came the summons to his deathbed. It was hard enough to go back and finish the year, but it was harder still to think of returning to a motherless and fatherless home.

"With the approach of May the thought became almost unbearable, for that month always brought back in a special manner the remembrance of my dear mother. Henriette remembered, too, and sent me a box of the white wistaria to place on Mary's shrine in memory of my father and mother. Through my tears I arranged them on the altar. Kneeling to pray, I found myself unconsciously repeating the prayer that Marie Thérèse and I had made many years before in the chapel at Nam-san. Suddenly I seemed to see Marie Thérèse before me—a Sister of Charity! I saw myself in the same garb, and before us my dear father and mother smiling at us in approval, just as they had done when we were children. Then my eyes filled with tears

and through them I beheld only the chapel shrine. I realized that I was at St. Catherine's. I prayed for a long time there, and when I left the chapel, I no longer dreaded the future.

"As soon as I came home, I wrote to the Superior of the Sisters of Charity at Pekin and asked her if she would be willing to take me into the novitiate for native sisters, as I knew some Chinese. After a long delay I received a letter granting me the desired permission and informing me that my friend, Marie Thérèse, upon the death of her foster-mother, about nine months before, had entered the novitiate. I recalled the vision in the chapel at St. Catherine's and knew it to be a clear call.

"After all, it's not strange. I'm simply going to join my little Chinese sisters to help them rescue others. I only wish, Kitty, that a dozen or more of my American sisters were going with me. It is sad to think that we Catholics of America remain unknown to these poor people. They see only French or German or Belgian missioners, though more could be accomplished by Americans, since in the East the English-speaking nations have the greatest prestige, America above all others. If more could know these little Chinese sisters as I know them; if

more could realize how dear they are to Jesus and His Blessed Mother and how much they need our help, I am sure there would be scores ready to go to them. And that is what I have asked each day during this month of May, as I have placed the wistaria at the feet of our Lady."

Mary paused here, as if she had finished her story. After a minute or two, Kitty got up from her chair, went over to Mary's side, and taking her by the hand, said earnestly, "I see it all now. I'm sorry for what I've said. Forgive me, Mary. I did not understand. I do now, and I'm going to pray that others may follow you."

Then, as she gently, almost reverently, kissed her friend good-bye, Kitty breathed the silent prayer, "May the wistaria continue to bear fruit."

A MOTHER'S VICTORY.

By Fr. John Wakefield.

RS. CYRIL HAMILTON was not a selfish woman, so far as she knew herself and as others saw her. She had reared three boys and two girls and had devoted her life unceasingly to them and to her husband. Except for an occasional visit to some old friends and a night at the theatre or opera a few times a year, this good woman did not seek many pleasures outside her own family circle. Yet there she reigned supreme, watching with pride the development of her manly boys and her two helpful daughters.

The first shock came when the oldest of her three boys told her of his engagement. The news brought her no little grief, yet she managed to conceal her feelings and even admitted later—but only to her confessor—that they were a revelation of selfishness and jealousy which she had not suspected in herself. Then she settled

down to the inevitable, the more gracefully, perhaps, because her daughter-in-law was a lovable little person who carried cheer with her wherever she went.

Then John "stepped out,"—John, her second boy, the big, quiet lad who used to hang around her like a great mastiff, and who seemed so indifferent to all other women, even to his own sisters.

But John had done well, friends said, and the mother was pleased that they thought so. She began to speak often of her two married sons and she doted, as new grandmothers—and old ones—are wont to do, on the wee things with whom they have shared some of their own blood. She even resigned herself to the picture of her husband and herself keeping house quite alone in a few years, for Mary and Alice were already known as "desirables," and as for Joe—he might fall into a net any day.

Joe was the one whom everybody loved and wanted. He had a good mind, a keen sense of humor and a gracious, unaffected manner. He impressed all with the idea that he owed much to them and deserved little or nothing in return. For the slightest attention to his needs he overflowed with gratitude, naturally and sincerely

expressed, and he was always at hand to assume disagreeable responsibilities for others.

But there were times when Joe could not be found even by his most intimate friends and every little while, smilingly but firmly, he declined an invitation or quietly slipped away from some gathering which he had been in the habit of attending. In fact, Joe was not altogether what he appeared,—a buoyant young man, with no thought but for the pleasures of life. After graduating from college, he had at once entered his father's office to be trained for a business career. But he was deciding, during these few months, a question of which friends and parents knew nothing, a question that, deep down in his soul, was calling urgently and insistently for solution.

Joe Hamilton had made up his mind to be a priest. He smiled, sometimes, when he thought of the surprise in store for those who had no suspicion of his intention. Some of his companions were Catholics, it is true, but they had been trained in the atmosphere of a public school at one of the large State Universities, and while they had much respect for the priesthood, they never alluded to it in connection with their own lifework.

As for his parents, they were what the Church calls practising Catholics. They went to Mass regularly, received Communion together not infrequently and were always gracious and generous when any appeal was made to them for church needs. Aside from this, however, they did not enter into the parish life, and in the home circle religious matters were rarely mentioned. Mrs. Hamilton had judged, or misjudged, the parochial school by conditions that had existed in it a generation before, and for this reason her children had never come within the reach of its influence. Sodalities, confraternities and reunions were excellent things for other people, but not for the Hamiltons. They admired the pastor, Fr. Edwards, as an active priest and a thorough gentleman, but they knew little of him. It was only Joe who loved him from a distance and secretly envied him his place between God and man.

Joe's quiet observation of this priest, the frequent visits made by the boy to the Blessed Sacrament at hours when scarcely any one but himself was present, and an earnest, childlike spirit of prayer,—these were the influences that had worked silently and gradually to convince him that God was calling him to be a priest. He

had spoken of the matter to Fr. Edwards and, encouraged by him, had redoubled his prayers.

He knew that he wanted to be a priest, but—where? He could not be a priest simply for his own soul's sake, for the office of the priest is to serve the people. But what people? He knew, from the growing spirit of indifference and luxury all about him, that there was need of good priests in his own State. He had also been impressed by members of several religious orders who had visited the parish church at different times and whom he had observed as closely as he could without a personal acquaintance. Yet his mind was not clear. He had an indefinable longing for some sphere of priestly life that had not yet been disclosed to him.

Then, one Sunday, light came to him. He went to Mass with his mother, not, as had been planned, to the shorter service at nine which she much preferred, but, on account of an accidental delay, to the High Mass and sermon at 10:30. A stranger appeared in the pulpit that day, with an interesting but novel plea for English-speaking missioners in the Far East. He called, not for passing attention, but for constant participation in this broader and truly Catholic life of the Church. He spoke of the world-wide mission of

Christ, illustrated it by striking examples, gave out some rather startling figures and asked for subscriptions to a paper which would note the progress of a movement as old as the Church but comparatively new in the United States.

Joe listened with rapt attention, placed in his pocket one of the little slips which had been left in the pews and on which he had noted the name and address of the speaker, and went home in a very quiet mood. When his mother remarked the visitor's articulation and asked Joe if he did not find him entertaining, he acquiesced without betraying his interest, and the little break in the Sunday sermons was soon forgotten—by the mother. But when Joe went to bed that night, it was after long prayers and with the practical conviction that he had discovered his lifework.

In three days he was in correspondence with the preacher of the preceding Sunday, and before the week was over, he was closeted with Fr. Edwards, who, he found, knew more of him than he realized and was not apparently surprised, though evidently pleased, at his decision. By the end of the month Joe had received word from the Foreign Mission Seminary that his application had been accepted and that he should report within a fortnight.

FIRST FIELD BLESSING AT MARYKNOLL.

Then he knew that the secret could no longer be kept from his family. His father had often expressed the opinion that a young man, past twenty-one and free to choose his path in life, should take up the work which most appealed to him. So when Joe faced him the next day, it was with a clear eye and a respectful but firm reference to this principle. Reluctantly, but manfully enough, the father admitted it.

But Mrs. Hamilton lost her self-control when her son broke the news, and nature had the upper hand of grace in her for the greater part of a week. During this time Joe was attentive to her slightest wish, but she avoided all reference to the idea which had suddenly come like a black cloud, separating this bright young soul from family and friends. Alice and Mary shared their mother's feelings, but out of love for their favorite brother tried not to show their disappointment.

Then the unusual occurred. Jane Sedgwick, a neighbor and former school-companion of the girls, had just returned from a trip around the world and dropped in to tell her experiences. They were interesting indeed, for Jane was full of life and anecdote. And she had been so impressed that she hoped to return and give the

next five years, and perhaps more, to the service of the Methodist Foreign Missions.

"You know," she said on leaving, "America is a household word to-day in the Far East and we have a glorious opportunity to introduce our religion there. I don't suppose you are interested, as I believe you Catholics are quite content with your labors here, which are certainly very great.

"But then," she added, "we Protestants think that religion is like merchandise—the more you export for foreign consumption, the more you have to enrich the home-country. Good-bye."

The girl had meant no offence, but Mrs. Hamilton found herself indignant and was provoked with herself because she had made no reply. She recalled the earnest words of the strange priest who had spoken a few Sundays before,—his glowing reference to recent martyrs, to the splendid labors of the Catholic apostolate, to the high type of sacrifice demanded from Catholic missioners, which she knew was in striking contrast to the comfort of Protestant ministers. There was only one regret expressed by that preacher,—the lack of missioners from America. But she was sure that this would be remedied. Of course there were scores of American Catholic youths who would be willing to go to the Far East

if necessary. If they would do so for their country and for business, they would certainly do so for a higher motive.

Then Joe came to her mind and she shuddered. But the light that had entered, had come to stay. She went to her room and sank on her knees before the crucifix, which had never meant to her what it did now. And she admitted to God her lack of faith and love, and her utter selfishness.

Her eyes were moist when, an hour later, she passed through the hall-way and down the stairs. As she turned on the second landing, she met Joe mounting the stairs, slowly and thoughtfully. She waited for him and he hastened to give her the full passage, smiling a little sadly as he did so.

She did not pass, however, and before Joe could move a step further, his mother's arms were around him and her face was pressed against his as it had been when he was but a baby-boy.

He was almost unnerved, for the thought that his departure would cause suffering to others had been from the first his severest trial and the one consideration which could make him hesitate for a single instant to fulfil his purpose. He felt now that as soon as his mother could recover herself, she would appeal to him to stay at home, but instead he heard these words:

"Joe, I'm a selfish mother and you've taught me a lesson that I shall never forget. My hope is that God will grant me some credit for bringing such a boy as you into the world and giving him to the service of the foreign missions. American youths are needed there and I have no more right to object to your going than any other mother has to resist her son's desire. It is hard to lose you but I am proud to think that God has called my son to be one of the pioneer apostles from this country, to work for Him in lands where He is not known."

THE STORE ACROSS THE WAY.

By Fr. John Wakefield.

THE sign *To Let* had been taken out of the little store-window across the street from St. Patrick's Church and no one was more interested in its removal than zealous Fr. Ryan, who exercised spiritual jurisdiction over the parish and incidentally a considerable influence over all that concerned it.

The young pastor's heart was in his work and his work was in the town. He had had a long fight to effect the closing of the pool-room formerly located opposite his church—a substantial-looking structure that was the boast of Catholics in that particular section of New Jersey. And now he wondered who was going to occupy the place.

Even as the priest asked himself this question, a man in overalls that were once white, stopped

before the window, deposited paint and brush on the bricks, and standing at the curb some feet away, made ready for an "artistic" attack on the field of glass. But just then the rectory door-bell rang and between visitors and a hurried sick-call, Fr. Ryan did not find time to return to his chair by the window until after supper.

He was glad then of the opportunity to relax a little over the evening paper and a few periodicals, but before dropping into his seat, he suddenly thought of the store across the way. He looked over, and a low exclamation escaped him. It was nothing to prick the conscience of an earnest director of the Holy Name Society but it certainly did express disapproval. The new sign read:

JOHN FONG

LAUNDRY

Fr. Ryan never had liked Chinamen. To be sure, he had not had any personal experience with them, but he had heard they were a low set, especially these laundrymen. His neighbor, Fr. Franch, had been obliged to run one out of the town because of his perverting influence, and it was generally understood that they gambled and

smoked opium whenever they had a chance. They surely were an undesirable lot.

The young pastor tried to console himself with the reflection that the fellow across the way was in any event under his eyes. Still it was annoying to feel that even his moments of recreation must be interrupted by a more or less constant espionage.

As he looked again, he discovered on the sign, just below the name, a small ornament which appeared exactly like the letter M surmounted by a tiny cross. He smiled at the resemblance between it and the medallion on the base of the Blessed Virgin's statue in his church.

That was Monday. On Wednesday John Fong, a tall, clean-looking Chinaman, arrived, carrying a graphophone case in his hand. A wagon-load of belongings came soon afterwards, and by Saturday morning the same John was ready for business at the new stand.

Fr. Ryan had been watching operations whenever he could, and he became so interested that when he went into the dimly lighted church on Saturday night, he imagined for a moment that he saw the young Chinaman kneeling in one of the pews. He smiled again at the coincidence.

But the next day, when the pastor turned to the people after reading the Gospel at the last Mass, he almost forgot his announcements as he spied John Fong erect before him, guarding the end of the second pew. It was a real struggle to talk that morning, and all day long the priest was puzzling to find out why the fellow should have come into the church.

He decided to take the bull by the horns at the earliest possible moment. So before Monday morning was far advanced, he stepped across the street, opened the store-door and saluted John Fong, Laundryman.

The Chinaman actually beamed as he recognized the priest, and before the latter could utter a sentence, he found himself seated at a little table behind a partition that divided the old pool-room into two compartments. John was standing over him, pouring tea into a dainty cup that had never had a handle. A barrel half full of rice, a chest of tea, two chairs, the table with some cups and saucers—these were the visible furnishings of the room. Anything else there might be was hidden by a screen that stood in one corner. As Fr. Ryan glanced about rather anxiously, he suddenly fixed his eyes with keen interest on two objects that hung on the wall,—

a crucifix and a highly colored, glossy print of Our Lady and the Infant Christ.

John Fong was not less keen, and as Fr. Ryan turned inquiringly, the Chinaman made the sign of the cross and said, *"You Catholic too, yes?"* It did not take long for Fr. Ryan to assure his host on this point, whereupon John produced an album of photographs and post-cards and spread it before him.

Most of the prints were of Canton and near-by villages in the province of Kwang-tung. The first page was adorned with a picture of the Bishop, John Mary Mérel, an alumnus of the Paris Seminary, and one of the Cathedral, a splendid type of Gothic architecture and quite spacious. Astonished, Fr. Ryan turned the page. There he found a view of the interior of the church, filled with devout worshippers, all Chinese, to whom a priest, evidently Chinese also, was speaking. In another place there were photographs of Mrs. Fong, and one of a little family group surrounding a table on which was standing a statue of the Blessed Virgin. These were followed by snapshots of shrines and chapels, and of some Sisters with their orphan charges. While Fr. Ryan was buried in such revelations, John went behind the screen and returned with

six books. They were all printed in Chinese characters but they bore the Latin *imprimatur* of a Catholic bishop and the advertisement of a Catholic printing press in Hong-Kong.

The priest did not say much, but smiled, wished his neighbor good luck, and withdrew with the remark that they would see each other often. And they did, with a quite unexpected result for Fr. Ryan.

John Fong was at Communion the next Sunday and people began to ask questions. Was that Chinaman baptized here or in China? How many Catholics were there in China? Were they getting more numerous? Had they any priests of their own? What missioners were teaching them? Had we any American priests over there? Did the Chinese make good Catholics?

Good Fr. Ryan could not answer. He was, as we have already remarked, full of zeal for his own work. Shortly after entering on his duties as assistant to the former pastor, an invalid, he had been appointed administrator. There was much to be done and the young priest had set himself to the task so earnestly that he

CHINESE SEMINARIANS.

rarely left the town, except once a month to visit his family in Newark, and occasionally to make some purchases in New York.

While the old pastor lived, Fr. Ryan had been careful not to offend him by radical changes, but gradually he had put new life into the people. In the matter of arousing them to any interest wider than that of the parish, however, he had, without giving it much thought, followed the example of his superior.

Word came regularly from the chancery office of collections for certain diocesan needs, for Indian and Negro Missions and the Propagation of the Faith, for the Catholic University, or the Holy Land. All these notices received respectful attention, were transcribed into the announcement book and read to the people, but there was rarely a substantial increase in the result. And after the pastor's death, though changes in other lines were more frequent, the tradition in regard to outside collections remained. As nuns look to the stranger—all alike—so exterior needs had appeared to Fr. Ryan.

But now that John Fong had come upon the scene, a new outlook opened up before him. The foreign mission news that had escaped attention in his weekly perusal of the *Monitor* caught and

held his eye. He even subscribed to a paper devoted exclusively to the foreign missions and wrote to the editor for some literature which would provide him with material for a series of mission talks to his Sodality, to the Holy Name Society and to the Sunday School.

He was no less attentive to his parish life than before but he now made time to consider many outside charities, and when the occasion offered, he pleaded earnestly for each good cause as it presented itself. And he noticed that the wider his interest in these needs became, the warmer grew his own zeal and that of his people, who in turn constantly praised his unselfish spirit.

The priest spent many spare moments with John Fong, who, though busy from morning till late at night, always stopped work when his pastor entered the store. Through John, Fr. Ryan, now thoroughly interested, started a correspondence with a French priest in Canton who was eager to learn English, and he then began to realize the urgent need of American priests in the new Republic.

It was this train of thought that led to a holy ambition striking deep into his soul, a desire to consecrate the remainder of his priestly life to the conversion of heathen people.

He kept his purpose secret, worked harder than ever to get the parish in prime condition and in the meantime wrote to the Foreign Mission Seminary, about which he had until lately known next to nothing.

It was not long before he received assurance of his acceptance at the Seminary. He then approached his bishop, a large-minded prelate, who, though conscious of the sacrifice the diocese was making, argued, that it would bring its own blessing in return and cheerfully consented to Fr. Ryan's departure as soon as arrangements could be made to replace him.

A year later the former New Jersey pastor was sailing from San Francisco for China.

On his way to the mission to which he had been assigned, Fr. Ryan stopped at Canton and surprised Bishop Mérel with the story of John Fong and his own call to the East.

When the Bishop learned the facts, he sent for Fr. Ryan's "China correspondent" and insisted that the latter should bring the American out to the little village where John Fong's wife and children resided. The visit was an interesting one for all concerned, including John's pastor in China, a French priest, whose admiration of his exiled parishioner was unbounded.

"John Fong is ambitious," the pastor said, "and is trying to earn enough in America to establish a business here. He wishes to give his two boys a thorough education and his hope is that one will become a priest and the other a prominent figure in the new Republic.

"You know," he added, "you have come to the greatest republic in the world, the United States of Asia."

Then the good priest explained that John's dream of his boy as future president of the Republic of China did not suggest an altogether worldly ambition. "The boy," he said, "will be trained in some American Catholic College, and then, 'bym-bye,' his father writes, 'little John will be big man, big Catholic, make everyone Catholic.'"

Fr. Ryan's former flock do not forget him, nor does he on his distant mission lose interest in them. They were his first children in Christ and they are still as dear to him as when he was among them.

His successor is, fortunately for him, in perfect sympathy with the cause of foreign missions. He became interested while at a seminary where

special attention had lately been given to this long-neglected, yet ideal, priestly influence.

Fr. Ryan's letters are read to the people, who, unasked, give the pastor not infrequently some gift or extra Mass-offering to forward to China.

It is largely out of these offerings that the American, for as such he is known among his confrères, has built a little chapel, called St. Patrick's and modelled in some details after a church of the same name not far from the Atlantic coast-line, in the diocese of Newark.

HER DEAREST TREASURE.

By M. D.

VENERABLE Curé was sipping his tea in the quiet rectory of a small Breton village. Suddenly there was a knock at the door and a letter was brought him. He glanced at it casually, but seeing its Chinese stamp opened it with eager curiosity. He gave a start as he read the opening lines, for it told of the martyrdom of the only son of a lonely widow, who had lately moved into his parish. It was a tale of splendid heroism,—but how would the mother view it? How could he find courage to tell her?

Rising from the table, he put on his hat and coat with nervous haste and hurriedly made his way to the house of the widow, a lonely, reserved woman, whom he had not yet learned to understand.

Breathing a prayer for guidance as to how to

break the news, he opened the door to find Madame Brinelles at her mending.

"Good evening, Father," she said, rising and pulling forward a comfortable chair.

"Good evening, Madame," he replied, toying with his watch. His troubled manner disturbed the widow.

"You are tired, Father. Will you not have a cup of tea?" she asked him with quiet solicitude.

"No, thank you, my daughter. I have something to tell you."

His tremulous voice now thoroughly alarmed the widow, and she asked him almost sharply, "Is there news of my son?"

"Yes, my child, I have just received a letter from his bishop."

"He is dead?" she asked quickly.

"Yes, my poor woman, he has died a martyr's death."

"Tell me all."

"Three weeks ago there was a fanatical uprising in Pekin and your son was the first victim. His sufferings were over in a short time, and now he is rejoicing in the palm of martyrdom."

"Tell me the whole story, Father," and she listened in silence while the priest falteringly told

her the painful details of her son's death. The good Curé, taken aback by the outwardly passive manner in which she received the news, made a few awkward attempts at consolation, and then withdrew.

Once alone, Madame Brinelles lost her forced calm, and hurrying to her little oratory, threw herself at the feet of Our Blessed Mother, and poured forth her very heart.

"The white-robed army of Martyrs praise Thee, O God!" and she thanked her Maker with all her soul for having given her such a son. She almost saw her François, glorious and triumphant, enjoying the reward of his sufferings. She was the mother of a martyr, think of it. Scenes of the past came back to her. She remembered vividly the awed joy she had felt when her son was raised to the sublime dignity of the priesthood,—when her own François had received the divine power of forgiving sins, and above all, the tremendous power of offering to the great God a sacrifice worthy of Himself. But now she was the mother of a martyr, and she prayed in silent rapture.

Then she was carried back in thought to her early married life when she had longed for a little child and she and her husband had made

"The White-Robed Army of Martyrs Praise Thee, O God!"

a novena to Saint Francis Xavier for that intention. In thanksgiving they had named the child after that ardent, apostolic soul, and now it seemed that the great saint had taken his namesake under his very special protection.

Now she realized that she was again childless and a widow as well, and that henceforth life on earth would indeed be an exile. Tears coursed down her cheeks, but she prayed to the Mother of Sorrows, who best could comfort her, and found strength in her who never turns a deaf ear to one in anguish. She prayed long and fervently, and when she arose, she was filled with new energy to make the most of the time that might still be hers in which to serve the Master. She fancied how her son must now value the opportunities that this life gives of winning untold union with God. But in spite of her lively faith and resignation, Madam Brinelles looked years older when the Curé called the next morning.

"Yours is a hard cross, but strength will be given you to bear it."

"It is hard," she assented, "but it is sweet to give him to the Lord, and I rejoice in his happiness."

The Curé, moved by her words and even

more by the holy peace that shone in her eyes, realized that hers was no common soul, and that she had soared to great heights.

"God will reward you for the spirit in which you have accepted this cross," he said. And as he returned to his presbytery his heart was full of gratitude for the inspiration that came to his own oft-wearied soul, from the faith of this noble mother who so generously had offered her dearest treasure to God.

PÈRE EMMANUEL'S VOCATION.

From the French of Charles D'Avone.

By Alice Dease.

HE ceremonies of ordination, which had begun at an early hour, were drawing to a close, and before midday, the students who were now priests of God forever had returned to the seminary, and in the parlors their friends and relatives were gathering round them, each one eager to receive a blessing from the young hands, so lately consecrated. There was one among them who was welcomed only by a single relative. Neither Emmanuel Palmeau's father nor his mother had been able to attend his ordination, but now his uncle Timothy brought the news that he was eagerly awaited at home, and that the old *Curé* had arranged that he should say his first Mass at midnight on Christmas Eve in the old chapel on the Sandhills where he had

made his First Communion and where the light to see his vocation had first been given to him.

Timothy Palmeau was stamped unmistakably by his profession. He was a seaman from head to foot, and it was his sloop which was to take the newly ordained priest home in time to say his first Mass on Christmas Eve.

It was early in the afternoon when they embarked, only themselves and two sailors, and the skipper counted on getting home before dark, unless, indeed, the wind that was blowing briskly in their favor burst too soon into the gale that was brewing away among the lowering clouds of the winter sky.

At first the little boat scudded along merrily, and the single passenger stood against the railings looking out over the waters to the city they were leaving far behind them. The towers of the Cathedral stood up over the other buildings, and the young man's mind went back to the scene of the morning, the solemnity of which was still fresh upon him. What work had God in store for him? Would his home be in the city, would his daily Mass be said in the Cathedral, or would it be in some country chapel, where quietly and uneventfully the days would pass until he, in his turn, should become a parish

priest himself? Wherever his bishop sent him he would find work to do for God, and he prayed in his heart that wherever he was he might prove a worthy servant of the Master Who in giving him a vocation to the priesthood had given him such a precious thing. He was used, since childhood, to the sea and he was disquieted by the coming storm only because he was beginning to fear that the boat would not be able to reach the port for which they were bound before midnight.

The white crests of the waves were breaking all around him and while the sailors worked, furling the sail which was now becoming a danger to them, his uncle bade him go below before the little deck was entirely swept by the rising waters.

It was very quiet in the single cabin and the boat was rolling so that Emmanuel was obliged to creep into one of the deep bunks, and lie there listening to the storm now roaring about them, and praying that God would watch over them and guide them into safety.

"Oh, my God," he prayed, "You are Lord of the sea as well as of Heaven and earth. You can bring us in safety to land. Our lives are yours to do with as you please. Have You put

me in the midst of this storm to show me that my priestly life will be surrounded by the storm and stress of sin and temptation? But I do not fear bodily or spiritual dangers for myself, for You are with me, now and always. I am Your priest and so long as I call on You for help You cannot forsake me."

"Emmanuel," came a voice, barely audible through the raging of the storm, "Emmanuel, we can do no more. We are lost unless God Himself saves us. Pray, you—"

Timothy Palmeau was not a man to give up hope until things were really desperate, and, as he spoke, the main mast, which had been groaning and creaking almost like a creature in agony, snapped off and fell on the deck with such a thud that the little sloop went down, down, and the green waters dashed over her as though to blot her out of existence forever.

The men on the deck, lashed to their places, were drenched and torn by the angry waters, and below in the cabin the solitary occupant thought that indeed his last hour had come. Then once again the gallant little vessel righted herself, and the flash of the lighthouse showed that they were not so far after all from the safety of the bay, in which their haven lay.

THE CEREMONY OF DEPARTURE.

[*From a painting on the wall of the Seminary at Paris.*]

"My God," cried the young priest. "Is this to be the end of my priestly life? Am I never to have the privilege of exercising the powers that I received from You only this morning in ordination? Am I not worthy to work as the humblest laborer in your vineyard? Oh, Saviour of mankind, if there is no work for me to do for You in France, think of the countries where priests are needed so sorely. Take me now if it is Your Will, but if my unworthiness is not too great, spare me to work for You among those who have never even heard Your name."

The thought of volunteering for the foreign missions had never come before to Emmanuel Palmeau. He had looked forward to exercising his priestly functions in some quiet French parish near to his own people, with maybe his mother or sister to keep his house for him; but now, in the darkness and clamor of the storm, a wish to make God known and loved in that part of the vineyard where the harvest was ready but the laborers few, sprang into being in his heart. It was not life for its own sake that he asked for himself,—that he asked for his uncle and the sailors,—but for himself he asked only for time to serve God more nearly, to love Him more

dearly than he had done before. *Fiat voluntas Tua,* he prayed,—that God's will might be done, whether it was to take him now, a priest who never had celebrated Mass, or to leave him to work in the exile of the mission fields. And God, seeing that the thought He had put into the heart of this young priest was so generously met, answered his prayer and spared his life. Once in the shelter of the great natural bay, the wind which outside had been their enemy, came to their help, and though with only small masts and sails, the sloop made the haven just as the bells from the chapel on the Sandhills were ringing out for midnight Mass.

They were all gathered on the little wooden pier to welcome him,—father, mother, brothers and sisters, little, scarcely known nephews and nieces, and old friends who remembered his own childish days. But Emmanuel hardly saw them all. His mother went on her knees to ask his blessing, but throwing his arms about her he bade her wait till his first Mass was said.

Never in the history of that sailors' chapel had quite such a scene as this been witnessed before—the midnight hour and the young priest saved almost miraculously from drowning, saying his

first Mass, with the old Curé who had baptized him as his *aide*.

* * * * * * * *

Forty years of work in China, work of which the world knew little, but which meant thousands of souls helped to the knowledge of God and ministered to! No one on earth can tell all the good that had been wrought when, at Christmas time in the year 1904, Père Emmanuel Palmeau passed to his reward. Those of his brother missioners who knew the story of his call to the foreign missions affirmed with sure and certain hope that the Master who had spared his life many years before would greet him now that death had really come with the welcome words, *"Well done."*

MARIE AGNES.

Translated by J. A. I.

MONG Chinese cities, Canton and Macao share the honor of having been the earliest in touch with Europeans and their trading ships. Even at the close of the sixteenth century, Portuguese merchants were established in these cities. The English followed before long, and soon absorbed a large part of their commerce.

At the outset of our narrative, we notice a revival in the business activity of this even then great city of Canton, which was gradually recovering from the misfortunes occasioned by war with France and England.

Among the Chinese in Canton, there chanced to be a young man of very humble origin, who was endowed with a keen mind, great perseverance and immovable calmness,—characteristics of his race. His loyalty and honesty from the start made him sought by all the Europeans

among whom he was thrown by various business enterprises.

This contact with civilized people afforded him great opportunities to make exhaustive studies in political economy and on the future of his race. He understood, in spite of his proud Chinese spirit, the backwardness of his nation in comparison with others—that its best qualities were as uncultivated ground which needed tillage. *Sing-Taï,* for such was his name, resolved to gain an intellectual culture, but according to European customs. He promptly applied himself to learn the English language, so as to write and speak it correctly. He listened, read and inquired. Thus was laid the first step of this studious young man's fortune.

One thing was still wanting. *Sing-Taï* saw and aimed at only material progress. His work, his business, brought him, after all, in touch only with the exporters and the shop-keepers, whose sole interests were the profits they could make in business transactions. These money-seekers had assembled from all parts of the world and their eager desire to get rich was the one inducement that brought them there.

In brief, our young Chinaman found nothing in these strangers to edify him, or to lift up his

soul. He practised the religion of his forefathers, although he left out, little by little, its inhuman customs. But he failed to learn from the Europeans a love and thirst for truth.

Sing-Taï at the start established a small export business, and later a bank, which enjoyed good credit; and in time he was able to send his agents to all the cities on the coast.

When he had become "the well-known banker, *Sing-Taï,*" he was in a position to contract a marriage alliance worthy of his considerable fortune, and in this important act he followed the habits of his race. The *mei-jin,* or intermediate agents employed, as was the custom in marriage contracts, chose for him a superior woman, endowed with all the qualities required of an accomplished young Chinese girl. The future Madame *Sing-Taï* was well skilled in the art of embroidery. She was past mistress in the making of tiny feminine shoes, and her grace in the manipulation of her fan was excelled by no other Cantonese. And what was of more importance, she had a good heart and a clear head, as the sequel of our story will show. She knew how to bring up with a firm though tender hand a large family with which she might be blessed, and she would make *Sing-Taï* happy.

The ideal wife being found, presents were exchanged, the marriage day settled and the bride, adorned, painted and perfumed, was led with great pomp to the husband's home. A stately palanquin, attended by a squad of musicians, carried her through a quarter of the Chinese city, and then near to the half-European section, where *Sing-Taï* awaited her. The announcement of her arrival was proclaimed by the noise of fireworks. When the palanquin was opened, the young bride, as she alighted, made four genuflections before her new master, for the Chinese proverb is well established by custom: *"The young girl is obedient to her parents, the wife to her husband and the mother to her son."*

The bride and groom then repaired to the altar of their ancestors, in the centre of the main room, to fulfill the prescribed libation, and from the same cup to drink the consecrated wine. This decorated apartment gave evidence of the young banker's fortune. Rare pieces of furniture were there, low seats without backs, and small tables of equal height made of precious woods ornamented with exquisite inlaid work. On the walls hung artistic inscriptions, done by a noted artist. They contained the addresses of Confucius, maxims on toil, on integrity, and on the respect

due to one's forefathers. The virtues depicted on the panels were, in truth, practised in the house of *Sing-Taï,* for the banker had not given up the religion of his race.

But every rich man should have at least two wives, under pain of being disgraced. His bride would be in truth the real wife, and the other would fill rather the place of a servant. *Sing-Taï* followed this custom, but after a few years, finding it necessary to leave Canton to superintend the establishment of a new bank in the north of China, he left his second wife in his native city, instructing her to take care of his old parents, while he himself settled at Chefoo in the province of Shantung, with Madam *Sing-Taï* and the children already born of their union.

The eldest child died at an early age. The second, *Ahung,* is the subject of our story. Through her we shall become acquainted with her four brothers and sisters.

In 1888, shortly after the family settled in Shantung, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary landed at Chefoo. The nuns leased a poor Chinese dwelling next to the church. This house proved large enough for the Sisters, but was altogether too small to harbor the orphans who, from the beginning, were put under their care.

It soon became necessary to find a larger building. In the Chinese street nearest the European quarter, they leased a suitable house, plain but roomy, and here awaited the construction of a convent. The property was owned by *Sing-Taï,* who had hardly been informed of the Sisters' desire, when he graciously placed it at their disposal.

In the eighteen months during which the nuns lived in this house, they became more intimately acquainted with the interesting family of the banker, appreciating their natural goodness, and the loyalty of their hearts.

On his side, *Sing-Taï* observed the new arrivals, and became friendly also with the priests. He said little, but gradually his heart was filled with admiration, and he gave to the mission continual proof of his esteem. *Sing-Taï's* purse was always open to the needs of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, and in making loans to them, great or small, he refused absolutely to receive any interest. Thanks to him, the children sheltered in the mission were saved many hours of suffering from poverty. The stores of the merchant furnished the asylum with all needed provisions, and the orders were often largely in-

creased through the generosity of their benefactor.

In the meantime *Sing-Taï* became intimate at Chefoo with an excellent well-to-do Catholic family. Before long, these new friends were quite inseparable. Wives and children constantly met, while the heads of the families were often seen together. The pagan at times accompanied the Christian to the Cathedral, where he assisted at Mass, always with the greatest respect. On these occasions he never failed to bow profoundly before the altar.

One day, toward the end of 1893, the doorkeeper of the convent announced to the Superior that Mr. *Sing-Taï* desired to speak to her. The Mother Superior received him, and, after many preambles and Chinese compliments, the banker, in perfect English, made known the object of his visit.

A Chinese lady of his acquaintance, married to a European, desired to place her daughter in a boarding-school, so as to have her brought up according to European customs. She had applied to the splendidly equipped Protestant college, where the daughters of foreign representatives in the Province were educated, and was told that children of *European parents only* were admitted.

"That is why," continued *Sing-Taï,* "I call on you. Will your answer be like theirs? I hardly think so. I also," he said, after a minute's silence, "had thought of placing my children in that college, but if they refuse to accept children of half European parentage, they would certainly refuse children of natives. I have three children whom I desire to receive a European training. If by accepting Chinese pupils you fear to offend the feelings of young ladies under your charge, I shall be perfectly willing to have mine drop their national dress."

This request of *Sing-Taï* was the first step toward a most desired end, for which the religious had offered earnest prayers. The Superior accepted *Sing-Taï's* children immediately, and told him that she much preferred having them dressed in their national costume. It was therefore decided that the eldest of the children, *Ahung,* should enter after the vacation, and the younger ones as soon as they were old enough.

The year 1894 was a trying one for China, especially in Shantung and the neighboring districts, which were, at the time, the theatre of war. The sons of the Celestial Empire soon learned, to their cost, that the Japanese army was better disciplined and armed than were their own

troops. To the self sufficiency and bravado of the first days succeeded a terrible panic. The city of Chefoo was put in a state of defence, and the native quarter became noiseless, while terrified, ragged, and wounded soldiers, some of them deserters, filled the streets, spreading dismay by exaggerated stories. Their reports were not altogether overstated. The danger to the city was serious enough. European men-of-war were obliged to enter the harbor, and guarantee the safety of their countrymen. A platoon of marines under command of an officer landed, and were quartered in the buildings of the Franciscan Missionaries, remaining there as long as danger lasted.

The marines were not the only guests of the convent during these troubled times. *Sing-Taï,* at the beginning of the war, had prudently confided his business to several European houses, honest and secure, who took charge of his warehouses and his banking affairs. Though determined not to separate from his family, he found himself compelled to do so on the announcement of the approach of the Japanese troops. He was sure of the good will of the nuns, and he begged the Superior to receive his family and protect them. His request was granted. An apartment

on the first floor of the convent was put in order, and during six months Madam *Sing-Taï,* her children and a few slaves, lived under the roof with the Blessed Sacrament.

The slaves of *Sing-Taï,* for all rich Chinese families have such, were treated as if they were his own children. The banker and his wife had purchased them when very young and reared them carefully.

The young son, *Ato,* five years old, from the day of his arrival won the love of the Sisters by his innocence and frankness. He seemed truly an angel,—so much so that the Superior took him by the hand and led him to the chapel, to offer him to Jesus at the tabernacle. The boy, who came for the first time to the convent, offered no objection and joyously smiled his thanks.

During his stay in the convent *Ato* was always a loving child, not at all petulant like his older sister, *Ahung,* the future pupil of the boarding-school.

The days passed slowly, alternating between sadness and hope. *Sing-Taï* came often to see his family and tried to hide from them his apprehensions. At length the horizon cleared, preliminaries for peace were signed, and little by little normal life was restored. The family of

Sing-Taï returned to their spacious home and a new era of prosperity opened once more for the banker. Far from injuring his business, the war had improved it. *Sing-Taï* felt himself fortunate. He never could forget the service rendered to him and his family by the Catholic missioners. Whenever a fête or banquet took place in his house, the banker put aside a quota for the Sisters and their orphans; and with implicit confidence he sent his daughter *Ahung* to school at the opening of the term.

The child was then seven. From her father she inherited not only a quick mind, trustworthy judgment, and a natural taste for civilization, but also a spirit and a tenacity which accounted for her many later struggles.

From the outset surprises awaited her; but, resolving to become European in her ways, she displayed no astonishment, and with Chinese cleverness applied herself to master all that she noted about her. Brought up until then by her mother and a faithful slave to believe in idolatry, she was astonished at the ceremonies of the Catholic Church. She soon began to see their mystic beauty and put constant questions to the Sisters, to satisfy the pious curiosity which agitated her soul.

At that time, as to-day, one met at Chefoo children professing various forms of Christianity. There were Catholics, Protestants and schismatics. This sincere young Chinese soul soon made the choice. She was drawn by natural instinct toward the true faith of Christ. Only love and kindness could have made her proud nature give way. Example also had a strong influence. She watched attentively her Catholic companions, and found them better and more obedient than the other children she had known, and she strove to become like them.

Nothing seemed above her strength. Respect, obedience, punctuality, piety—all these qualities *Ahung* determined to practise. Now and then her struggles were severe. Two distinct natures were at war in her young soul. The one loved goodness and uprightness, and was inclined to virtue and sacrifice. The other was haughty, proud and imbued with pagan ideas; and by a strange contrast, was at times deceitful. But the child had a strong will, a true affection for her teachers, and an ardent desire to please the Infant Jesus, to whom with fervent ardor she had given her heart. These motives helped *Ahung* during many years to master her passions and the susceptibility of her nature.

The gift of a rosary gave her extreme joy. Thenceforth it was a pleasure for her to repeat many *Ave Marias* at the feet of the Immaculate Virgin, and she displayed so much fervor in learning her catechism during these two years, that she obtained the prize for religious instruction.

Her studies of the Catholic faith were known to *Sing-Taï,* who gave them his approval. Shortly after his eldest daughter entered the convent, he begged the Sisters to begin the education of *Ato,* his young son, and two years later that of his younger daughter, the little *Wiking.* During his call on the Mother Superior, the banker frankly said: "I shall be very grateful if my children are taught the Catholic religion, and even if later they decide to adopt it." The Superior listened with surprise and delight, and wondered how it was possible that with such opinions, the kind *Sing-Taï* did not ask to be himself baptized. *Sing-Taï,* however, was one of those who believe but do not dare to face the opinions of their fellow-men.

The banker was not to be the only victim of this weakness. *Ahung* must suffer also. "As to my eldest daughter," he said, "I regret that I am unable to give her this freedom, but it is

useless to consider it. From her birth she has been betrothed to a pagan, who will certainly not allow her to follow any religion other than his own. I cannot break this betrothal. Chinese customs are not like those of Europe, and I would not dare to take upon myself the consequences resulting from a contrary act, which might be most disastrous to my family. My other children are free to become Catholics, and I will place nothing in their way."

The Sister's heart was full. Poor *Ahung!* Little caged bird! Who will break your chains, who will unbind your wings, and let you take flight toward those blessings that attract you?

The Superior had been in China many years and knew well the obstacles which would surround *Sing-Taï* should he break the betrothal of his daughter. She knew, too, that an official declaration is regarded in the Celestial Empire as equivalent to a marriage, and that should death overtake a promised husband, the unknown betrothed is considered his widow. The only relief would be found in prayer and the nuns were soon assailing Heaven. God alone knows what secret offerings, what unknown sacrifices were made by those saintly souls, who, not content to have

given their lives in His service, never ceased to offer holocausts for other souls.

At the start, *Ahung* did not perceive the difference that existed between her and her sisters and brothers. One evening, returning from a holiday with her parents, she threw herself sobbing in the arms of the Sister, while her brother had come back radiant. "What has happened?" asked the Superior, much disturbed by the attitude of the two children. "*Ahung,* why do you cry?" The child was unable to answer, but *Ato* came forward and said, "She cries because my father told me that I could become a Catholic, but as for *Ahung,* it would be impossible at this time. She is betrothed,"—added the little fellow, in a mysterious tone, "and she will be obliged to wait until her future husband gives her permission to be baptized."

Filled with sympathy, the Superior quietly consoled *Ahung,* urged her to pray without ceasing to the Infant Jesus and to His Divine Mother, being sure that they would not refuse her a grace which must be so pleasing to them.

This trial was for the child the turning point in her life. She put no limit to her sacrifices. The thought of baptism gave to her soul wings, with which she mounted the difficult steps of

perfection. From that time she deprived herself of an hour's sleep every morning, so as to assist daily at Mass, and she could be seen, wrapt in her thoughts, fervently imploring the Saviour.

The practice of prayer obtained for this young girl a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Later, in her copy-book a simple prayer was found, one which she had composed at this time and which she recited faithfully. The supplications of this simple heart reached Heaven, and after events proved that the Mother of God wished to mingle this innocent flower with those of brighter hue, the martyrs and virgins who in the year 1900 were to be offered to the King of Heaven.

Yet in spite of constant exertions, pride and envy occasionally excited in *Ahung* outbursts of ill temper.

As the daughter of a rich banker, of a man who had scornfully refused the office of mandarin, *Ahung* enjoyed many luxuries, though she would quickly have sacrificed all to become a European. And, indeed, except for her complexion and the Chinese dress she wore, nothing marked the child of the Celestial Empire in this young girl, who spoke with ease and elegance

French and English, and had cultivated the best music. *Sing-Taï* had refused to subject his children to the barbaric Chinese treatment of cramped feet, so that *Ahung* had also the free and supple gait of the European.

High marks were frequently given to her in preference to her European companions, and it was only with gentle tact that the Sisters could teach her in all these matters the obligation of gentleness and humility.

The stubbornness of *Ahung* was also trying at times. One day, in the dining hall, she obstinately refused to eat the meat placed before her. The Sister left the child, compelling her to remain in the room until she should have finished her meal. When *Ahung's* better mood had returned, she discovered that she had to go by herself to the chapel, to repeat her evening prayers. At the feet of the Blessed Virgin the child burst into tears, which she failed to conceal, believing that she was there alone. In a dark corner, however, the Superior was praying. She rose and going to the girl, made this soul, so dear to her, understand the merit of obedience and of giving up one's own will. "This little sacrifice," she said, "might have obtained for you the grace of baptism." "Oh, Mother, if I had only

IN THE COVENT CHAPEL.

(Photograph from F. Douspis, Swatow, China)

known it!" cried the eager child. "Indeed, I promise you to do better in the future."

She kept her promise. This word, *baptism,* became to her as a star, a light, a goal so dear that nothing could keep her from reaching it. Yet how was she to obtain her wish?

Are you not exhausted, dear *Ahung?* You have prayed so long. You have so fervently begged to be loved by the Infant Jesus!

It was the month of March, 1900. In the Provinces adjoining Chefoo, the Boxers were increasing in number their mysterious meetings, and, under the most frivolous pretexts, sought to quarrel with the Christians.

Winter is very severe in Shantung and one hardly catches a glimpse of Spring during St. Joseph's month. *Ahung,* with her impetuous nature, had not been taking the necessary precautions during the inclement weather. When the bell rang one morning, she tried in vain to leave her bed. Burning with fever, racked with pain, hardly able to draw breath, the young Chinese girl fell back on her pillow, quite overcome. The attendant hastily called the Superior. The doctor was summoned, and without hesitation he de-

clared the young girl to be suffering from a severe attack of pneumonia. She was taken to the infirmary and her family notified.

At the end of three days, realizing the serious condition of her child, *Mme. Sing-Taï* lost all self-control, and insisted that her own care and the usual Chinese remedies should be applied to save her daughter's life. She convinced her husband of this. The child was taken home, in the belief that Chinese doctors would better understand a Chinese constitution.

Ahung's delicate condition, however, could not support the rather strenuous treatment which she was made to undergo, and the banker, in despair, recalled the European doctors from the hospital. It was then too late. The malady had taken hold of the frail girl, and fever was consuming her. During three months *Ahung* struggled between life and death, happy only when the good Sisters were present to talk to her about Heaven, and of the Saviour and baptism. Then her drooping eyes would brighten and a smile of bliss pass over her pale lips. On her bed-curtain she had hung an image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, on which her eyes were constantly fastened.

The warm and gentle breezes of May restored

a little life to the enfeebled body. *Ahung* was able to be carried in a portable chair to the convent on the birthday of the Mother Superior, but this improvement was deceptive. The Divine Bridegroom was calling the dear child, and as she grew weaker, her soul entered into communion with her God, and burned with a great desire to possess Him.

On the twentieth of June, it was reported that *Mme. Sing-Taï* was about to leave Chefoo, as the disturbances in that Province had increased. The alarm proved unnecessary. Nevertheless, the Superior that same evening called on the banker. *Ahung* was much worse. Aware of the Sister's presence, she stretched her emaciated arms towards her and began to cry. "What is the trouble, my little girl?" asked the Mother Superior. "I am afraid to die without baptism," sobbed the child, as she rested her head on the nun's shoulder. The Superior looked at her closely; the sunken eyes were bright with fever, the cheeks blanched, and the little mouth drawn by suffering. Taking a sudden resolution, the Superior said, "Don't be afraid, the Blessed Virgin will watch over you." Then approaching the banker, who was sadly observing his sick child, she begged him to allow *Ahung* to return

to the infirmary. The unhappy father, realizing now that his daughter would there receive care which even his affection could not give her, agreed. "If my daughter wishes it," he said, "I consent to her removal." So the following day *Ahung* was made comfortable in a large, bright and well-ventilated room in the hospital of St. Sebastian. The sea-breezes entered the open window, and the patient child, stretched on her snow-white bed, smiled, listening to the prayers the Sisters were reciting, and to the voices of the children, coming up from the sun-lit courtyard. It seemed to *Ahung* that this beautiful, bright chamber was the prelude to baptism. It was more than that for the dear child; it was for her the opening of the gates of Heaven. She had not come to the hospital with the idea of recovering, but to be a Christian. It was this sole wish that kept life in her wasted body.

She asked to be spoken to of the Saviour, to be told of the happiness of Heaven, to be assured that she would not die without receiving baptism.

That evening the chaplain came to see the little invalid. He gave her much comfort, and left her with these words full of hope: "Prepare yourself, for the time will soon be here."

Indeed, the time had come; the voice of the

Bridegroom was already calling the young bride to the eternal feast. The Mother Superior requested *Sing-Taï's* consent to his daughter's baptism. It was a dreadful shock to the banker, not that he feared her becoming a Christian, but because he understood now that all hope was gone. "I consent," he said, overcome with grief. "If she is to die, I wish her to die a Christian." Joyfully the dying child welcomed the sun's rays that next morning. Death would be welcome, for it would bring the grace for which she had longed during twelve years.

The blessed water was poured upon her forehead. *Ahung,* the pagan, lived no longer, and, on her death-bed, Marie-Agnes, the Christian, chanted her thanksgiving.

She waited yet awhile, this happy child, for into her purified heart the Divine King would descend. And this First Communion brought Heaven within her horizon, while Extreme Unction strengthened her for the final struggle. Then Marie-Agnes seemed to be no longer of this earth; her soul shone through her transparent body, and one would not have been surprised to see about her a legion of angels.

The door opened, and *Sing-Taï* entered. He saw his daughter radiant, and felt the spiritual

atmosphere of the place. Marie-Agnes, with a gesture of tender affection, called to him: "Father! I am so happy! O! how many prayers I will offer for you." The old Chinaman, overcome with emotion, could only sob in reply. Then at the foot of the bed some one else began to weep. It was little *Wiking*, the second daughter of *Sing-Taï*, who was crying bitterly. When the banker had recovered from his own emotion, he turned to *Wiking* and said: "Why are you so sad, my child?" The child answered, "Because, like *Ahung*, I too wish to be baptized." A dying look from Marie-Agnes to her father implored a favorable answer. *Sing-Taï* could not now refuse his daughter. "Console yourself, *Wiking*," he said. "Whenever you will, you shall be baptized."

Marie-Agnes had obtained her first ardent desire. Her sister would belong in future to the true Faith; and her lips moved as she tried to express her gratitude. Somewhat troubled by his emotion, which he was unable to control, *Sing-Taï* moved away. As he took a last look at his daughter, he said to the Superior: "My child is about to die; I feel it; and I have not the courage to see her again; neither has her mother. Sister, my daughter is now a Christian, and it

is my wish, if it be possible, that she be buried in your cemetery. Let her be interred with funeral rites, according to the custom of European Catholics."

During this day another grace was granted to Marie-Agnes; she was confirmed by Bishop Schang.

She lived two days longer with her eyes turned towards the portals of paradise. She waited impatiently for these to open, and never ceased to pray for the conversion of her family. The Divine Saviour could no longer refuse her, and the young Chinese virgin took her flight to God.

Dressed in white, and with a loving smile, the child was carried to her last resting-place. The family of *Sing-Taï* and the clerks of his bank followed her to the grave; but the father and mother were absent, their deep grief keeping them away.

Ahung Sing-Taï had always longed in her dreams for a burial according to Christian customs. She rests in the midst of European Catholics, her tomb is like theirs, and an inscription in French tells the name and age of the child. Only a few Chinese characters are

on the base, running as follows: "Here lies the daughter of *Sing-Taï,* the banker."

Marie-Agnes must certainly have offered her prayers in Heaven for her dear ones, for many graces were granted, after her death, to the family of *Sing-Taï.*

This child had the gift of prayer. She had known how to find the strength to overcome her faults, and the grace to conquer all obstacles which kept her from baptism; and now, a powerful intercessor with the Heart of Jesus, which she had truly won, she asked and obtained the conversion of those so dear to her on earth.

Our little virgin died on the sixth of July, 1900. Three days later, on the ninth of July, seven Franciscan missionaries were decapitated by the Boxers. The sacrifice of the innocent child and the blood of the martyred missionaries pleaded before the throne of God the cause of China, imploring the perseverance of the just, the pardon of the guilty, and the salvation of all.

The death of Marie-Agnes drew together more closely the missionaries of the convent and the wealthy family of the banker.

Shortly after the child's death, the work of redemption begun by her prayers was continued in that house blessed by God. As in Bethlehem the first to be called were the poor, *Madame Sing-Taï* brought to the hospital a little slave, hardly three years of age, who was seriously ill. Earlier in the story, we have said that in the family of *Sing-Taï* the slaves were, so to speak, adopted children, loved, and well taken care of and instructed. Therefore, seeing the danger this little one was running, the banker said to his wife: "The Sisters are the only people able to cure this child; take her to them."

This child, when she entered the hospital, appeared so frail and ill, that it almost seemed as if she were to be the first fruit of the prayers of Marie-Agnes.

Madame Sing-Taï made frequent visits to her slave, and one day she called the Superior and said: "*Kounénée,* I give you this child. My husband says that if she dies under your care she will go where *Ahung* is,"—and the eyes of the poor mother instinctly sought Heaven—"but if, on the other hand, she recovers, we give her to you; she will increase the number of your orphans, and become, like *Ahung,* a Christian."

Contrary to all expectations, the little slave recovered. Thenceforth she was free; and she received in the sacrament of baptism the name of her young protectress, Marie-Agnes, and became one of the band of joyous orphans.

At length, poor *Madame Sing-Taï,* exhausted by successive emotions and anxieties, was obliged to take to her bed for many days. The memory of her Christian daughter pursued her, and she called to her aid the friend, also a Christian, who had awakened in her heart the first sentiments of piety. The kind *Madame Liou* hastened to come to her.

One day, not feeling so well as usual, the banker's wife sent for her husband, and, in presence of *Madame Liou,* she begged him, in case she should die, to entrust the bringing up of all her children to the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, as she did not wish them to be left to the care of a pagan step-mother. "Only the *Kounénée,*" she said, "are capable of being mothers to them. Under their charge my children will have the best of care, and will be well instructed in the Catholic Faith, the only learning I desire for them."

This was asking a great sacrifice of *Sing-Taï,* who was an affectionate father; but he under-

stood and granted his wife's request. Heaven, however, did not wish to deprive our Chinaman of his faithful companion; she recovered from her illness, and, some time after, appeared in the convent parlor.

"*Kounénée,*" she said to the Superior, "I am about to go with my husband to spend several months at Canton. While there, we shall attend the wedding of one of our slaves. My son *Ato* will be placed in the college of the Brothers at Shanghai, and I come here to leave with you little *Wiking.* My husband desires me to state that now there is nothing to prevent the reception of all our children into the Catholic Church. We will not promise any of them in marriage; they will remain free. Moreover, we hope that without loss of time they may become Christians; and we should consider it an honor if some day our daughter had the good fortune to be as you, *Kounénée.*" In saying these words, *Madame Sing-Taï* looked at the Sister's white habit with admiration.

The Sister, on the other hand, overwhelmed with joy, could hardly find words to thank God, whose workings in this family were so marvellous, and she assured the Chinese lady that her daughter should have the best of care.

But *Madame Sing-Taï* had yet another wish. "I would like," she said timidly, "a statue of the Blessed Virgin, like the one *Ahung* had, and before which she prayed so fervently. I also, *Kounénée,* wish to pray before it. For the time being, my becoming a Christian is out of the question . . . . but the day will come, *Kounénée.*"

The nuns prayed fervently, offering many acts of thanksgiving. These are the events which repay long hours of suffering. "Do not pity us," writes one of these Sisters, "you who count and weigh our sacrifices. One ray alone of His grace is our reward!"

Who will describe the joy of *Wiking!* During three years she had ingeniously repeated: "Little Jesus, baptize me."

The sister of the impetuous *Ahung* had nothing of the vehement emotions of the latter. She was a gentle, candid creature, a heavenly flower which opened at the foot of the altar, offering to God the fragrance of an innocent heart which lived for Him only.

On the return of *Sing-Taï's* family, about the middle of September, 1901, her religious instructions were at an end, and the time was set for *Wiking's* baptism.

MARIE CÉCILE LIANG.
(Photograph from Sr. M. Bernardine, China)

Ato, her older brother, whom we remember as a little child at the convent of Chefoo, and who had the same desire, was also to be baptized. The date chosen for this event was the eighth of September.

The Mother Superior wished to obtain beforehand the formal consent of *Sing-Taï.* The good Chinaman replied to her, saying: "I not only give my consent in writing, but I promise to oblige my children to live up to their faith like true Christians. As for myself, I am now too old to become a Catholic. You have too many precepts which would cross my habits; I could not submit to all your rules, and I have no desire to be a bad Christian. I respect and admire your religion. My children are young; they can be made to understand the importance of its duties. I wish them all to become Catholics, and I have given permission to my wife to do the same whenever she desires."

Poor, good *Sing-Taï,* how heavy is the chain of habit, which still keeps so far from God a heart so noble, a mind so sincere!

The feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin was celebrated at Chefoo in an exceptionally beautiful way. The good Bishop desired to officiate, himself, at the christening of these chil-

dren over whom he had watched so long. At the ceremony were *Sing-Taï,* with his wife and all his family, as well as most of the boarders of the school. The grace of the Sacrament was stamped on the brows of the children, enveloping them with a mysterious charm that inspired all with respect. *Ato* was named Jean-Marie, and *Wiking,* Marie-Cecile.

A few days after, Jean-Marie made his First Communion in the chapel of the convent. Then, during the period preceding his departure for France, where he was to complete his studies, he lived at the Bishop's house, in order to learn more French and English.

The children were grateful for all that the Sisters had done for them. They were also aware that their happiness in being Christians was due in great part to them. So one of the first tasks of the now Marie-Cecile was to write to the Mother General, whom she did not know personally.

"Dear Rev. Mother General:

I am very much pleased to write to you, and also to tell you that my brother and I were baptized this year. It was the Bishop who baptized us; my brother was named Jean-Marie,

and I was given the name of Marie-Cecile. Mother General, have the goodness to pray to the Blessed Virgin that my parents may receive the grace of baptism. I wish you a happy New Year. Do, please, answer this letter, and send us your benediction. I find nothing suitable to write about, and I know but little French.

Please give me all the news from Rome; I shall be happy to hear it. I expect that when I am grown up I shall become a Sister. Mother General, I should so much like to know you. When are you coming to China?

Good-bye, do condescend to bless your little Chinese children, who entreat the Infant Jesus to shower many graces upon you.

MARIE-CECILE SING-TAÏ."

Jean-Marie and his sister had the same longing. Even at the age of five this little boy said: "I shall be a Catholic priest." After his First Communion he confided the desire of his heart to his young sister. "It may be impossible for me to become a priest, as our family are pagans; very well, if I cannot offer my services to God in this way, I will offer them to the Fathers; I will become their servant." Such was the ambition of the oldest son of the richest banker in Chefoo.

Jean-Marie left China for France, February 14. That was in 1902. Marie-Cecile remained behind, the only Christian in the family circle at home, including her father and mother, her sister *Be-hing* and her little brother *I-sang*.

Note.—In the month of July, 1913, the editor learned that Marie-Cecile had changed her name from Miss Liang to Mrs. Yong. Her husband is the son of a Chinese banker in Hankow. He began his education in France, where he was baptized four years before. At latest accounts the young couple had planned to live for a while in England, where Mr. Yong would finish his studies. Long life to Marie-Cecile and her husband!

THE TURNING POINT.

By Fr. John Wakefield.

OHNNIE WILLIAMS "hated" geography. There were too many capitals and chief cities, rivers and mountains, populations and products. It was "orfully dry stuff."

Yet he liked travel, as all boys do. In fact, he got so worked up over *one* travel-story that after reading it, he and his chum, Billy Ryan, started out to tour the world. They were brought back, however, that same night—by a big man with a shiny badge—and they were glad to get something to eat and to go to bed.

But geography was no book of travel—any more than the picture of a ball-game up on a fence was the real game.

Johnnie went to St. Agnes' Parochial School and his teacher was Sister Benedicta. She was "fine," Johnnie thought, but with all her art and a generous store of patience, she could not get

the boy, who seemed to be fond of his other studies, interested in geography. "And little wonder!" the good nun said to herself occasionally. "That text-book is a bundle of bones, and boys like something living."

But one day there was a loud rap at the classroom door and in came Fr. Wallace, the pastor, accompanied by a man dressed in a black tail-coat. The stranger had the longest whiskers Johnnie "ever saw in his life," and more than one boy in the room confessed afterwards that if he had seen him in the street, without Fr. Wallace, of course, and there had been any soft snow around, those whiskers would have had a sprinkle of white. Johnnie's eyes sparkled at the very thought of the "shot"—for the irreverence of American youth had not escaped him.

But the stranger was no itinerant Russian pedlar. Neither was he one of those solemn-faced Rabbis such as Johnnie met down on the "avenue,"—a narrow street lined with tip-carts, frowzy women and babies,—through which he walked every day with a chip on his shoulder, looking for trouble.

Fr. Wallace dispelled all doubts by his announcement: "Boys, I am bringing you to-day the Very Rev. Fr. O'Gorman, who has charge

of a great society of missionary priests and Brothers, and has been all over the world many times. He is going to conduct the class in geography this afternoon."

Johnnie forgot the whiskers on the moment. One day he had read for a visiting priest, and Sister Benedicta had told him afterwards that he had made a "big hit"—though she did not say it in just that way. And now he was going to make a "mushy cake" of himself, and before Fr. Wallace too. He knew the pastor's searching eyes would "light on him" and he would be "called."

And sure enough he was! "Come, Johnnie," said Fr. Wallace, "take the pointer and show us on that map of the world how much of it you have seen."

The boy went quickly to the map, picked up the long pointer, set it down at Philadelphia and made a sweeping, circular movement with the handle, leaving the end fixed at the City of Brotherly Love.

Little Sister Benedicta blushed deeply, the class was convulsed, and the visitor was evidently amused. Fr. Wallace, who tried to frown and smile at the same time, soon recovered from his surprise, told Johnnie to keep his eyes and ears

open, and taking the pointer from him, passed it to the missioner.

Johnnie had well expressed himself by that double movement. He had never seen beyond the outskirts of Philadelphia, but he had aspirations to circle the globe, even if he did hate the old map.

The missioner looked kindly at the boy as, half-ashamed, he sank into his seat. Then he opened the class by indicating his own home city in England, where he had, some thirty years before, been studying geography just as they were doing now.

He told them of his training here and in other English cities, of his seminary course in Belgium, his departure for India and his transfer to Borneo. After that followed the story of his appointment to supervise all the missions of his Society, his visit to the Holy Father and finally his travels around the world,—by railways, tram and steamer—on foot and on horseback or "donkeyback"—in ox-carts, in Chinese junks, in canoes and in dug-outs.

Johnnie listened, all ears and eyes. The bones began to take flesh. The map became like the

IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

(Where boys are kings, enthroned on strangely upholstered divans.)

great Earth to him—only the earth seemed smaller than he had thought it was. He pictured to himself the visitor's friends—bishops, priests, Brothers, nuns all over the world—and they grew into his heart at once, so that afterward he found he could recall most of them. He was sorry when that geography lesson was over, and the missioner, after giving his blessing, left with Fr. Wallace.

He found himself, however, with two consolations. He had opened the door for the priests, and the stranger, as he passed out, had patted him on the head and said with a smile, "My little man, some day the small end of that pointer will describe for you what you made the large end describe to-day. You too will encircle the world. Be a good boy and say your prayers. We may meet again."

This was one consolation. The other was that Johnnie learned to look upon the once-hated map as the home of his friends in all parts of the earth. Whenever a strange name came up, he located it by its nearness to Fr. A. or to Sr. B., or to that place where the missioner had been traveling in a dug-out. Geography was no longer the "dry stuff" that it had been. It was *alive*—and as interesting "as any travel-story going."

That geography lesson was the *turning-point* in the life of John Williams. It awakened in him a desire not only to see the other side of the globe, but to bring to its darkness the light of faith. At the age of nineteen he applied and was admitted to the Foreign Mission Seminary, and six years later he started for the Far East —across the Atlantic to Europe and thence over Russia and Siberia by the Trans-Siberian Railway. He spent ten years in the mission field and was then recalled to take a responsible position in the Seminary.

As the long voyage across the Pacific Ocean was drawing to an end and the great steamer approached the Golden Gate, Fr. Williams recalled the words of the stranger who had taught the geography class so many years ago. He had never met the missioner since, but he had now fulfilled his prophecy, " Some day you too will encircle the world." And he wondered, a few hours later, when the train headed for the East, who was in Sister Benedicta's place and whether, when he reached Philadelphia, he would find at St. Agnes' the old pointer that had started him on his travels around the world.

OUR LADY'S MISSION.

By Alice Dease.

[The facts of this story were supplied to the writer by Sister Fielding of China. The picture was actually found in Meisan by a Lazarist priest.]

HE life of a missioner is a hard one. Father Leo had come to China with but one illusion on this point. He had looked forward willingly, to the bodily privations, to the loneliness, to the weariness, to the discomforts; for he had thought that all these would be but the setting of the picture of his life. He could with God's help bear everything if only his labors and trials were crowned with success. He had imagined himself preaching to crowds eager for the truth, expending himself in giving instructions and administering the Sacraments. In this dream of the life to be, his services had been called upon from every side. He had heard of the harvest

awaiting the laborers, of the souls that were deprived of the consolations of religion because of the scarcity of priests; and the days and weeks spent upon the ship had seemed to him interminable, so eager was he to begin his work.

Then he had gone up country to the district to which he was appointed; and the priest with whom he worked until he had gained a knowledge of the language, told him,—what indeed he soon saw for himself—that all he had heard at home had not been exaggerated. Rather had the need for priests, the fervor of the converts, been underestimated. Then he passed on to his own district to begin work, and slowly, but from the very start, his disappointment had grown.

His own people were good, if not deeply fervent; but others, the pagans around, were simply indifferent. They were not opposed to him and his teaching; they ignored it; they did not care.

And by degrees he began to lose heart. Perhaps at this time he may have wondered whether after all he had not mistaken his vocation in coming to the mission field. Did the reason of his non-success lie in the fact that his real work was undone in some quiet home parish? As he grew disheartened, so too did his people decrease in fervor. He visited his schools, but

because the children were so few he had no word of encouragement for them or for their teachers, and in consequence teachers and children alike were affected by his despondency. And thus it was with other things, till he found his people so indifferent to everything not obligatory, that when the month of May came round he wondered wearily if it was worth while decking an altar and reciting the prayers as he had so joyfully done the previous year.

Coming in one evening from a long, hot ride, he had almost decided to submit to the apathy of his people, when he found a letter from home awaiting him. "May will be beginning when you get this letter," wrote his sister, "and every evening when I go to say the rosary before the altar where long ago we used to pray, you and I, that Our Lady would accept you as her own missioner, I, now alas! alone, will think of you at your May altar surrounded by your dear Chinese, and I will pray still that our dream of long ago may be perfected, that you may ever be Our Lady's missioner. But don't think that I am waiting until the month of May to pray for you. I do that every day . . ."

He dropped the letter and his thoughts flew back over miles of land and sea, over the years

that had passed since the days of which his sister spoke, when they were children together and their great thought for the future had been that he should be Our Lady's missioner. *Our Lady's missioner!* and he had entertained the idea of letting her month pass by with no outward sign of his love, with no effort to encourage the devotion of his flock!

Despite his fatigue and the lateness of the hour, he went out to the straw-thatched building that did duty as a chapel, and set to work preparing a place of honor for the May altar.

Returning to the house, he carried out a colored picture of Our Lady which he had brought from home, and for which one of the Christians had prepared an elaborate frame. As he went, thus laden, a Chinaman, passing by, stopped to cast a look of mingled curiosity and surprise at the picture in his arms. He was a stranger in the district and Father Leo would not have given him another thought, did he not notice that the man had followed him to the little chapel door and stood watching every movement as he put the picture in its place.

"By what name, O stranger," said the onlooker in a tone of perfect respect, "do you call the lady whom you honor as though she

were an ancestor of your own?" "She is my mother," said the priest, "the mother of my God, and my mother, and her name is Mary."

"Your mother!" repeated the man. "Nay, stranger, that cannot be. You are not yet an old man, and in my family the picture of that lady has been venerated now for two hundred years."

"Then you are a Christian?" cried the priest. "I am a Chinaman," replied the other with the air of one who does not understand what has been asked.

It took Father Leo some little time to discover that the great, great grandfather of this man, who had been a mandarin in Pekin, had brought to his home, in a village that stood on the outskirts of Father Leo's district, a picture of Our Lady holding the Infant Jesus in her arms. Whether the mandarin himself had become a Christian was uncertain, for none of his descendants remembered any of his teaching; but though still pagan, they venerated the picture as a portrait of the Queen of Heaven, and once a year in the month of August, exposed it for public veneration, burned joss before it, and carried it in procession like the rest of their gods.

Father Leo's suggestion that he visit the mandarin's picture was greeted with delight, and a few days later he set out for the distant village with more eagerness and hope than he had felt for weeks. He was greeted with delight by the mandarin's clan and welcomed at the home of his new-found friend. There in the place of honor usually given to an idol, was an unmistakably Christian picture,—a picture, as the owner had said, of the Queen of Heaven with her Son in her arms. His testimony, that the newcomer possessed and venerated a duplicate of their portrait, made a great effect on them all,—an impression that was deepened by the assurance that in August all Christians celebrate a feast, the Assumption of the Queen of Heaven, just as they did.

Seeing that he had gained their attention, Father Leo went on to tell the people of his conviction that their ancestor had been a Christian and his descendants had only lapsed into the idolatry of their pagan neighbors and forgotten the true doctrine, owing to persecutions and the lack of priests to administer the Sacraments and instruct the children. He assured them that it was the Queen of Heaven who had sent him to teach them, and that to please

THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

her they ought to listen to the doctrines of Christianity.

But so important a step could not be taken without due consideration, and a family council was held, to which Father Leo was admitted. Those opposed to the idea argued that several times foreign missionaries had come to the place wishing to teach their doctrines, their first stipulation being that the picture of Our Lady should no longer be venerated. Indeed, one of them had offered three hundred dollars to be allowed to remove the picture; and so for two reasons Father Leo knew that Protestant missionaries had been in this field before him. First, they had not approved of honoring the Mother of God, and secondly, they had money to spend.

When these objections had been answered, those who were eager to know the truth, made their plea. Father Leo claimed to be the servant of their venerated lady. He, too, venerated her, and it was in her name that he came to tell them more about her and her Son. In all the years her image had been in their house had she ever asked a favor of them? Was it not, rather, she to whom they were indebted? And the speaker went on to remind them how, when, within the memory of all but the youngest

present, a terrible fire had broken out in the village, a woman had been seen pouring water on the roof of their house, so that, though the flames rolled fiercely about it, they were quenched at once; and while all their neighbors were rendered homeless, they and the house which sheltered the picture remained safe and untouched. Further back in the time of their fathers had not the whole district been devastated by cholera and *their* house alone spared? Night after night, a woman and a child had been seen standing as though guarding the door, and there were many, not of the family, still living, who could bear testimony that they and others had been taken by friends to the venerated picture when they were stricken with the dread disease, and had been cured at her intercession. These, the speaker declared, were only a few of the many great favors their Lady had bestowed on them, and were they now to turn a deaf ear to the first and only request she made?

Thus the whole clan was gained over to the cause of Christianity, and a petition was drawn up begging Father Leo to remain with them, to teach them and their children the way to honor the Blessed Lady truly, and through her to know the truth and the way to heaven.

This was what Father Leo had dreamed of—almost an entire village eager for the truth, fervent souls who asked for nothing but the doctrine and Sacraments of the Church! The crown of success was before him, but withheld by reason of almost impossible difficulties. The village lay a day and a night's journey from his nearest mission post. He could stay only a few days and begin the teaching; but a church, school, teachers, a priest of their own were needed. They were poor; but among them they promised ground for a church and school, and free labor to erect what was needed. The building material and support of the mission Father Leo was to supply.

The means at his disposal did not even meet the demands made in his own district; but inspired with fresh hope and energy, he would not allow that the new work was impossible. It was Our Lady's own mission! She was its foundress and for a few hundred dollars was not to be disappointed. He promised to return soon with teachers who would remain in their midst, and bade them pray that Our Lady might inspire her clients in other lands to help in making this, her mission, a permanent one.

As he rode homeward he thought of the dark

day, not far distant, when his heart was heavy with weariness and hopelessness. He had been wanting in faith, he had expected too much, and instead of punishing him, God had given him through the Blessed Virgin this favor and this lesson.

He redoubled his efforts and soon had the joy of seeing his fervor reflected in his people, and the faith burning and spreading in his new district. And he found time to write the good news home, and to make an appeal in Our Lady's name, not only for material support but for prayers for his converts and for himself, that he might have the strength and grace to continue the work which he felt his sister's prayers had obtained light and renewed energy for him to begin.

PE-LOU.

By Mary J. Rogers.

WINTER everywhere—especially in the heart of Pe-Lou as she trudged blindly through the rapidly deepening snow, a bundle in her arms.

A month ago she had been happy in dreams of the child that was soon to gladden her heart. She would name "him"—of course, the gods would send her a son—"Tower of Strength." But that must be a secret until he grew a little. For a while she would call him "Ugly Toad," to deceive the evil spirits who might be jealous of his beauty and destroy him. Then the happiness of presenting her first-born—a son—to his father!

Thus had the little mother dreamed. And when the child did come and was placed in her tired arms, and she knew that the son had been denied, her heart was crushed and not even the

tiny fingers against her cheek eased the anguish of disappointed hopes.

The father was away. He must never know the disgrace she had brought him. She would get a man-child from some poor mother who could not afford to keep her children. Others had done so. And her own baby? It was but a girl, not worth even a name—and the faithful old nurse alone knew of the misfortune and would help get rid of the unwelcome child.

As soon as she could get about, Pe-Lou had stolen from the house and started in quest of a son—her heart bitter with resentment and anger at the little form she held, but which she could not leave in the snow as she had planned.

The darkness fell early that bleak day, the silence of the night frightened her, the rough, cold walk wearied her weak body and the dear babe nestling trustingly in unwilling arms, grew heavier at every step. Still Pe-Lou kept on.

The wail of a child broke the stillness. Were the gods calling to her? Pe-Lou's heart beat joyously. Through the falling snow she made out the lines of a small house, from whose windows streamed an inviting light. The infant cry drew her on. She could at least rest for a moment and perhaps she would find the "son."

Why was it impossible for her to drop her burden in the snow which covered the earth like a soft mantle! She did not know.

She passed through a little gate and rapped at the door, which was opened quickly and revealed a strange-looking creature garbed in a flowing white gown and a head-dress Pe-Lou had never seen before. Bewildered, she stared till she unconsciously yielded to the gracious smile and outstretched arms of Sister Claire. The wanderer had happened on a little Franciscan Orphanage—the refuge and salvation of so many helpless and abandoned children.

If the good nun had noted the bundle and guessed Pe-Lou's mission, she did not show it. Usually the little living burdens were left at the door without so much as a "by-your-leave" or "to-be-called-for-later," and had Pe-Lou known this, she could have done likewise and felt sure that these good spirits would care for her child.

The genial manner of Sister Claire made up for the bareness of the room, and tired Pe-Lou, refreshed by a warm drink, fell under its magic and almost forgot she had a "baby to exchange," till that child of sorrows demanded attention. Then Pe-Lou, still ignorant of the kind of place to which she had come, told her wretched story—

and disclosed a heart not hard and wantonly cruel, but clouded by material standards and unwarmed by divine love.

In answer Sister Claire led her to a large room where some fifty babies were tucked away in baskets. Once more the mother's heart rose. Surely the gods had guided her footsteps to this enchanted house!

"This one," began the Sister, drawing back a coverlet, "was found on our doorsteps quite numb with the cold. And this little crippled boy here, was picked up from the gutter. This laughing elf"—she stopped a moment to play with the smiling child—"was rescued by a boatman, who found her in a box hidden in the rushes!"

Thus they went from basket to basket. Poor babies, helpless girls and maimed boys, thrown away like rubbish, with no one to love or regret them.

Pe-Lou's eyes filled with tears and she held her own baby closely. What kind of place was this!

"What good are they to you?" she demanded of Sister Claire. "Why do you keep them?"

It was Christmas Eve. Taking the poor little mother before the crib—a crude affair but dear

SAVED FROM THE DOGS.

to the Christ Child for the love that raised it—and gazing at the Infant surrounded by adoring shepherds and their flocks, Sister Claire told the story of Christmas, that wonderful love tale of the Christ Child come to save all—boys and girls and men and women of every nation and time.

I think the angels must have been watching over Pe-Lou, for her heart warmed, the Christ-love touched her—she knelt and adored, not knowing why, and promised the Infant God to keep and cherish the child that had been given to her.

It was a simple act of faith and love, rewarded in later years when Pe-Lou received Christ sacramentally, and gave this daughter, whom she called "Heart's Ease" to become a Virgin of Purgatory.

And you, Christian mothers, who read this little story of Pe-Lou, you who are so happy in the love of your children born in the Faith and nurtured by its saving graces, what does the love of Christ really mean to you!

Do you accept it selfishly, as your heritage, or does your gratitude prompt you to say a prayer for benighted mothers like Pe-Lou? Does it urge you further—to denying yourself material comforts and teaching your little ones to do

likewise, that with your sacrifice offerings, priests and nuns may be sent to such hungry souls? And how many of you can make the sublime sacrifice—the offer of your treasures, even as their little hands caress you, to go in the name of the Christ Child to these souls that God will demand of you on the last day!

THE CALL.

By Mary J. Rogers.

UT you can't mean that you are going to let the boy go! The idea is ridiculous! He has every chance for a great career, and we need priests like him. The heathen got along all right before this missionary craze started. Haven't we bread-lines enough to take care of now? And then, Dennis, he is all you have."

Dennis O'Toole, railroad magnate, genial host, faithful friend, the heart of every charitable affair in the town and father of *the Boy,* raised his hand imperatively.

"Stop, Jim! Don't make it harder! I've fought it out by myself. The boy is right and he'll go with my blessing and my love."

A long silence followed. The two friends smoked hard and stared at the glowing coals of the great fire which cast a soft light over the luxurious room.

The Boy was completing his first year at the Diocesan Seminary, and a week before had written for permission to change over to the Foreign Mission House to prepare for a remote field of labor. It was a great blow to Mr. O'Toole, whose dreams of this talented only child had seen him preaching to crowds in the city churches, heard his praises sung, beheld him loved and honored by all. But the struggle was over. Faith had triumphed over pride. *The Boy* was to go. He would be a lowly shepherd, a teacher in the wilderness, unknown to the world.

"You've never lived in China, Jim?" There was no reply to this half questioning remark which Jim recognized as the preamble to something Dennis O'Toole wanted to say.

"I was an only boy, too, and when the railroad people offered to send me to China to look over the ground in view of opening up the country, I was wild with enthusiasm. My mother, a widow, didn't think of herself. It seemed the opportunity of a lifetime and I went off with her blessing. Her only fear for me was expressed in the words, 'Dennie, my son, don't forget your prayers.' I never saw her again. She died of pneumonia before I reached the other side.

"Things were pretty black for a time. I was alone—all alone—in the world. But youth rises above every difficulty. The Company backed me liberally and the novelty of the life, the people, the country, filled every moment with interest, and night found me tired enough and ready for sleep.

"I discovered a little French Church where I could hear Mass, but I hadn't acquired French or Chinese and could profit only by the edifying example of the simple priest and his devout native congregation.

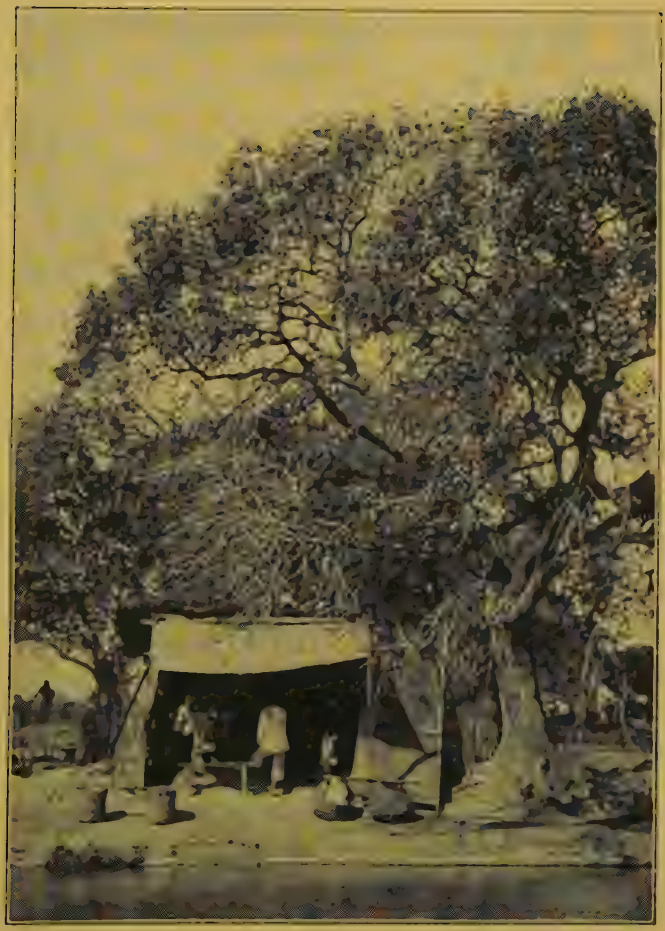
"For two years I travelled through China, from Tong-king to Manchuria. The roads were poor and progress slow. I went as a rule in the *palanquin,* a kind of chair supported on poles and borne on the shoulders of coolies. At first, as we passed through the narrow lanes of the cities, which serve as streets, everything attracted me—the boys, gambling with copper *cash,* the ragged, dirty jugglers performing marvellous feats, the festival processions, the gaudy shops, emaciated beggars lying flat in the gutters—and, out on the highways, the water-carriers and the peasants wheeling their barrows of produce to the city markets,—all this was interesting enough for awhile.

"Occasionally I came upon a church or a convent—but the priests and nuns were always French, German or Italian—anything but English or American. I hadn't approached the Sacraments since I left home and I was getting careless about my prayers. When you start to go, Jim, it's hard to stop.

"I frequently met American Protestant ministers who received me warmly, and with whom I stayed for several days, talking about home, watching them work, and wondering always why I had not found any of my own to speak the English tongue.

"Then began my inland trip. It was early summer when I left Shanghai to go into the region north of the Yang-tse River. The crowded city was already fever-stricken, and the foul air rising from the filthy streets unbearable. It was good to get away from it all into the open country. The first part of the trip was delightful. The terraced mountain slopes with their tea-gardens, the rice swamps, and the smiling children weaving baskets at the doors of their quaint, rough houses, told of industry. What wonders our railroads could work there!

"At last the poor food we got at inns, fatigue and lack of companionship began to tell on me.



A CHINESE COUNTRY INN.

(Photograph sent by Fr Douspis, China)

One morning I dismissed my carriers, left my simple outfit at the inn to be called for later, took a few clothes and started out.

"I don't know what I intended to do. I was weary in heart and soul and body. For the first time in months, my mother's words, 'Dennie —don't forget—your—prayers'—started pounding in my head at every step. It was awful. I thought I was going to die and that devils were mocking me, an idea that every leering idol in the roadside shrines emphasized.

"Toward nightfall I reached a Franciscan Convent, where I was fed and housed. But my hosts were foreigners again, and I was still alone —horribly alone. There was no one in the community who could speak English. The next morning I started out in spite of protest, for the good Fathers saw that I was far from well, and at noon I arrived at another Protestant mission settlement.

"There at least I heard my native tongue, and I was content to rest for three days with the minister, his wife, and their two children. The physical comfort of those days, the sense of 'hominess,' lured me strongly. Again my mother's call came, 'Dennie, don't forget your prayers.' But I couldn't pray.

"Dennis O'Toole was losing his faith, Jim, because he was weak and couldn't find a priest to help him."

A line of delicate smoke rings was Jim's only comment.

"Then," continued Dennis, "for my mother's sake I wandered on, away from temptation. I didn't care what happened. That night I lay down by the wayside in a green field under the open sky, and there the miracle was wrought. I prayed, prayed as I did when a child, and slept.

"In the very early morning the merry chatter and laughing of children awakened me. I got up and saw some fifteen or twenty boys and girls with as many older people coming along the road. As they passed I noted that some of them carried rosaries. 'Perhaps it is Sunday and they are going to Mass,' I thought.

"Faint and burning with fever, I followed them for about two hours, and at last through the trees on a near-by hill I caught sight of a cross shining in the morning sun. How welcome it was! It would be good to die near it!

"I remember struggling up the hill, and greeting a kindly-looking priest—and that is all, till I opened my eyes three weeks later, in a tiny,

low room with the sun streaming in through two small windows on the cot where I lay.

"I was trying to locate myself when a hearty, cheery voice called, 'Well, my son, which shall it be, ham and eggs or Boston baked beans?' I found later that either order brought rice and coarse bread—but I tell you, I'll never forget the joy those familiar tones brought to me. A moment later the priest who had spoken appeared. I was so happy I tried to answer but couldn't. He came over to the bed, patted my head and said, 'Poor boy! Go to sleep now. We'll talk later.'

"Well, Jim, the fever had pretty nearly carried me off. It was a month before I could go on. Father McCreagh was an Irishman who, as a boy, had spent several years in America. He was the first English-speaking priest I had met in almost three years. There were a few others, scattered through that vast territory, but so far as he knew, no Americans.

"There he was working alone. He had built his own house. He was village doctor, nurse and teacher, as well as priest, and on top of all that had given up his bed to me, a stranger, had cared for me day and night and saved me, soul and body. Of course he was poor and often

hungry, but to win for Christ such souls as he found, was worth any sacrifice.

"I grew to love his people too, even in that short time. Their devotion was touching—and put me to shame. The children brought me flowers and pretty stones—just as this boy of mine did later. Reluctantly I left them, finished my work and came home.

"I've never forgotten Father McCreagh—he was a gift from God to me—nor can I ever forget my suffering and loneliness till I found him.

"But the strange thing is this, Jim. When the nurse put the boy in my arms for the first time, the thought came that some day he might be needed in China. I couldn't bear it, I tried to drive the idea away, and I've never told the story to the youngster himself. I can see now that his going is another instance of God's goodness to me."

"It's a clear call, Dennis," ventured Jim. "I didn't understand before. If I had a son and he was wanted there, I think I'd let him go, too."

The father of *the Boy* and the man who had no son gazed into the dying embers and followed the long road *the Boy* must soon take across the Continent and the wide Pacific—to his lifework, —*for God and souls.*

A MANDARIN'S SON.

To all who daily say "Thy kingdom come."

By Mary J. Rogers.

HAT did it matter to Anthony Lou if the dull-red setting sun foretold another day of almost unbearable sultriness! if his little feet were scorched and tired! Had he not sold every one of his baskets! He jingled the money in his pocket to a merrily whistled tune which fell soothingly on the tired souls of weary wayfarers.

Suddenly he stopped, looked for a moment at a little figure huddled in the corner of a temple gate, grinned and introduced himself by pulling the long queue temptingly exposed for just such a purpose.

A frightened, tear-stained face was raised quickly and defiantly to greet the smiling eyes of the tormentor. They stared at each other in surprise; the laughing eyes grew soft and

tender and beneath their steady gaze fear fled. The child arose and said simply, "I am glad you have come. I thought I had been overtaken. I am tired now and will go with you."

The tone was masterful, and Anthony unquestioningly led the way to his own house, a little cabin on the highway near the outskirts of the city, where he lived with his widowed mother. A stranger, always welcome in a Chinese home, was doubly so in the Lou house, blessed, for generations, by the miracle of Christ's love.

The two boys bowed respectfully to Mrs. Lou, whom they found sitting at the cottage door, her deft fingers weaving one of the delicate baskets by the sale of which she made a living.

"Honorable mother," said Anthony, "I have brought a pilgrim to our poor house."

"God has blessed us," she replied, and seeing the little fellow's sorry plight, without a query, led him into the house, fed him, bathed him and tucked him away on Anthony's low wooden cot, which soon carried him off to slumber-land. Anthony slept happily on the floor, dreaming curious things of the "grown-up" little boy beside him.

The next morning Mrs. Lou was already at her weaving and Anthony, squatted on the

ground, was sorting reeds for her and wondering if "that boy" would never get up and tell who he was, when the child appeared. With a dignity and stilted speech ill-fitting his years, and which threatened to bring the impish Anthony into disgrace, he prostrated himself on the ground and said,

"I am Li Wen-a-o, of the house of Tsin."

Mrs. Lou gasped. The house of Tsin was one of the oldest and most powerful in that region, and she shuddered as there flashed through her mind the memory of bitter, relentless cruelties towards the Catholic Christians. Her own father had perished by that very house.

The sweet child voice recalled her.

"I am eight years old. Three years ago my father gave me to the temple of Buddha as a sacrifice to the gods, who were angry with him and had sent sickness and troubles on our house. I served the priests and was to be one, too. But I hate them all!" Passion clouded his delicate features. "They took the gifts my father brought me. They gave the ugly gods the food my mother sent. The gods do not answer prayers. They give my heart no peace. Yesterday I said that I would not be a priest—that I would tell my father—and they beat me. I

ran away—I will not pray again. I will stay with you, most honorable mother,—and some day, when I am big and strong, I will go to my father and help him. He loves me, but he could not take back a gift to the gods."

The tone was final.

Child of a pagan temple! The innocence and charm of youth blighted—seeds of suspicion, faithlessness and arrogance sown!

Mrs. Lou looked at her own boy—poor, but reared in the atmosphere of love and faith—and her heart welled with pity towards this little being for whom Christ had died, but in whose soul the devil held sway. It was plain that according to Chinese codes the boy could have no place at home. God had sent this charge to her. She thought of two little mouths to feed—two little bodies to keep warm. It meant more baskets to sell, hours of the night for extra work. And his house had killed her father! But what right had she to visit the sin of the father on the child? She hesitated no longer.

"We are honored, little son. Stay with us, at least till the tea blooms again, and the air is sweet with its perfume. Perhaps your father will come for you then."

So Li found a haven.

But what of the temple he had left? Consternation and terror filled it when Li did not appear. Couriers searched the country-side in vain, for guardian angels kept the boy safe. And when, at the end of a week, the wrath of Tsin had not fallen on the temple, fearfully the bonze sent a message to him, saying that tourists, with guides whom they had reason to think were Christians, had visited the temple. Li had shown them about and—disappeared.

Yes, Li of the temple had disappeared. In the few years that followed, it would have been difficult for any one to recognize him in the happy child sharing the delights of being a boy with the joyous Anthony.

Together they went to the marshes for reeds, tender willow and bamboo for the baskets, and they vied with each other in finding the most delicately colored and rarest flowers for the "honorable mother."

Li had not dreamed there was so much love in the world, and his parched soul had reawakened to the magic of Mrs. Lou's affectionate care. Anthony's simple piety, too, had its effect, so that Li soon shared his devotions and like him prayed to the Virgin for good fishing, cus-

tomers for the baskets, or whatever need arose. To his delight the prayers were always answered. He had resolved that when he grew up he would go to the temple and tell the priests how much better Christ and the Virgin were, than Buddha and the gods.

Mrs. Lou's great trial was the distance, sixty miles, from the Catholic church. Two or three times a year a catechist came to baptize the children and examine the classes she had patiently taught catechism each week. Once a year, with a few other fervent souls, she made the long trip to the city to receive the Sacraments, taking with her those who were prepared, that they might enter the catechumenate for a short period of instruction, a necessary step before the reception of Communion and Confirmation. She had promised to take Li and Anthony with her the next time, and both were eagerly looking forward to the event.

Situated as they were on the highway, it was not unusual for tourists or business men journeying between cities to stop for refreshment and rest, and the boys had learned through them much of the country and of life in the cities. They had both resolved to be merchants some day.

One warm afternoon in the late summer Mrs. Lou had gathered her class in the tiny garden, when two travelers arrived. She served them with tea, rice cakes and pipes, and unmindful of their presence, went back to her labors.

But one of the strangers sat spellbound from the moment when the children, kneeling on the grass, had blessed themselves and made a little prayer to the Holy Ghost for light.

For the instruction Mrs. Lou had taken the petition—"*Thy Kingdom Come.*" "When we say that," she explained, "we pray that every one in the whole world may love God and serve Him. 'And how few here even know who God is, how much He loves them, or that He sent His only Son to earth to die for them on the Cross! So God expects every one of you who are His friends to bring others to Him. If you really love Him you cannot be selfish and keep Him for yourselves.

"But there are places in the world—Europe and America—where there are thousands of priests and almost everybody knows about God. Yet some there are too selfish to love Him, and few stop to think that God will ask them one day what they have done to help make 'His Kingdom Come.' You must pray for these

people, and you must pray especially that some of their priests will come to us and help us."

Then she told stories of heroic souls who had loved Christ enough to leave home and country to come to them, and of persecutions that they had suffered. She related how her father and hundreds of other Chinese men, women and children, when they once knew Christ, had preferred death to denying Him, till their hearts were fired with love, and they yearned to die for Christ too. Little did they dream that the shadow of the Cross had already fallen on them!

As she finished, the interested traveler drew near and said simply, "I am one of those selfish ones who know God and had forgotten Him. I am a Catholic, from America—came here to work when I was only a boy, thirty years ago, and there wasn't any church near, no priests who understood English anywhere—and finally I didn't even bother to pray. But I will now—and you are the ones who have brought a very disobedient and sorry subject back to his King." He bowed low to the surprised and delighted group.

Then, as if suddenly recollecting something, he turned to Mrs. Lou. "What's the sense of exposing yourself and these innocents this way!

God needs a few souls left to sweeten this devil-ridden country and help make 'His Kingdom Come.'"

The blank faces of all showed only too plainly that the rumor of a new persecution—which he himself had heard only that day—had not reached this quiet little hamlet. So more calmly he went on, "It is reported the Mandarin Ly Tsin is persecuting Christians relentlessly in the towns about. They say his son was stolen by Christians three years ago. He has searched for him in vain, and a few weeks ago in revenge he began a systematic, cruel persecution through his province. God grant you may be spared."

The stranger rejoined his companion and started off in the twilight, carrying with him a lesson of faith from those he had generally classed as 'pagans,' and a picture of eager, happy faces that recalled the days of his own youthful preparation for the Sacraments.

Mrs. Lou was stunned. She was responsible for this persecution! It would mean death, but she must go to the mandarin at once and save the rest. Yet Li was a Christian now, for he had been baptized in the Spring. Could she give

him up? All night she debated, trying to persuade herself that the rumor was false. She would have heard before of this, if it were not. But that it was true, was confirmed by two native priests who came in the early hours, seeking shelter.

Meanwhile little Li's mind was busy, too. Ly Tsin was his father. He himself had made the dear honorable mother take him for her boy and he couldn't bear to think that any harm would come to her and Anthony—and all the friends that he had played with. He would go to his father and tell him, and everything would be all right again.

Mrs. Lou had finished telling the priests Li's story and her own resolution, of which they disapproved, knowing that the blind fury of the mandarin would but be increased by her unusual tale, when the boy appeared. His little face was aglow with excitement as he knelt for the priests' blessing. He embraced the honorable mother affectionately, slipped out into the dawn and was far from sight before his purpose was guessed.

For a whole week the boy tramped—begging for food—sleeping in the fields or streets—dreaming happily of the good news he would soon bring, forgetting how tired he was. He had so

"He Knelt for the Priests' Blessing."

much to tell his father—about Anthony, and the fish and flowers—and the baskets. Life was much more interesting than it had been in that horrid old temple. And then there was all about Christ. He would make his father belong to God's Kingdom.

Once in the city, he was easily directed to the great house, approached through a wonderful wrought-iron gate and richly carved portico. The dusty, travel-worn child looked little like a prince, but he soon made himself known and was welcomed like a prodigal. There was general rejoicing in the household.

The boy had a mission, however, and he must speak with his father before any harm came to the dear ones he had left. So eager was he in the recital of his leaving the temple, of Anthony's finding him, of the years of happiness following—so tender in his expression of love for Mrs. Lou and Anthony—so simple in his story of Christ and His Mother and the two priests who had blessed him, that he was wholly unconscious of the insatiable, cruel eyes above the smiling lips that said, "Go now, my son, and rest. To-morrow you will show me your friends that I may repay them."

Ly Tsin could see in this unexpected return

of his child only an attempt on the part of the Christians to protect themselves. Grateful to them! Blood alone could atone for the misery he had suffered! He would teach them once and for all not to meddle with the sons of princes and the gods of China.

Early the next day, dressed in silken garments befitting his rank and with a royal escort, Li gaily set off. He had a beautiful kimono for the honorable mother, and for Anthony, a knife with a shiny, sharp, slender blade that would cut the willow and make a good clean whistle!

How long the journey seemed! Two whole days!

On the third day, as Anthony was sorting reeds at his mother's side, praying silently to the Virgin that Li would come safely back, he saw the approaching cavalcade, not an extraordinary sight on the highway, but in these days of fearful waiting, a terrifying one.

Then he made out the welcome figure of Li running towards them. He gave a wild shout, the reeds were scattered and Mrs. Lou, relieved of the strain, smiled happily at the flying figures of her boys.

They were breathless when they finally reached

her, and she took them both at once to her grateful heart.

There would be no more trouble, Li assured her; she must put the silken gown right on. And they went joyfully into the house to tell the good news to the priests, still in hiding with Mrs. Lou.

Silently the escort had followed up their charge. They had their orders and were eager to carry them out.

The reunited family and the priests were kneeling in thanksgiving before a shrine of the Blessed Mother, when the fury burst on them. Without a warning the priests were seized and slain and their bodies hurled into the street. Mrs. Lou rushed towards the boys, but there was no chance. She fell to the floor, her head crushed and torn by repeated blows. Li stood before Anthony, shielding him. A great grace and supernatural courage was poured into his soul. A rough soldier came towards them, but Li did not shrink as he said, "Kill me, too. Tell my father I am a Christian." He clung closely to the brother who had befriended him. The man, blinded with passion, struck. The two boys went down, broken like reeds before a great wind.

And this was but the beginning of the perse-

cution that watered the soil with blood. The mandarin's rage knew no bounds when he learned of Li's death. A Christian indeed! They had done well to kill him! Yet his heart was sore, for he had loved his son.

But martyrs' blood enriches a land—and in the years that followed, the hallowed memory of those fearful days spoke more eloquently than any teaching, and led soul after soul to the feet of the King for whose glory those heroic ones had died.

A FEAST DAY GIFT.

By Mary J. Rogers.

IT was early spring in San Francisco, the Golden Gate of the West. The air was soft and balmy and delicately fragrant with the wealth of flowers bursting into bloom.

Agatha Lambert was "coming out." The process was a slow one, with its dances, receptions, dinners and teas, but altogether delightful to the motherless girl who, after ten years spent in the peaceful monotony of a convent school, had been taken under the protecting wing of her mother's girlhood friend, Mrs. Scott-Martin.

Mrs. Scott-Martin was not a Catholic, but she had promised the dying mother to care for her child, to give her a Catholic training and when the time should come, the right kind of start up the social ladder.

The fulfillment of the promise had proved most pleasant to Mrs. Scott-Martin. From a sweet child, Agatha had developed into a sweeter

woman, bright, frank, sympathetic, with great, laughing, blue eyes that revealed the heart and soul of a child.

The round of festivities was nearing its close. On this perfect afternoon a "tea" was in progress, and as the luxurious brougham rolled along, Mrs. Scott-Martin suddenly recalled an important meeting of the Missionary Board on which she served, and which she must attend. It would not delay them long.

They found some thirty women gathered, fine, earnest souls, who, Agatha soon learned, gave up a day each month to work for missions in foreign lands. The idea was all new to her. She had of course prayed for the heathen, but she never knew or dreamed of personal service for such a cause. She was quite sure Catholics did nothing of the sort, at least in America, and her heart filled with a queer longing as she heard these women plan the collection of funds for foreign missions and discuss methods of arousing others to activity.

That night she wrote to the Sisters who had mothered her, asking all kinds of questions about mission work and opportunities of service. The answer was discouraging. Outside of prayers and almsgiving to home missions, and to the

" Holy Childhood " and the " Propagation of the Faith," they knew of nothing she could do.

A year passed—one of those delightful, never-to-be-forgotten years when youth is care-free and the pleasures of life wholesome. But the seed sown in the young girl's heart had taken root and was beginning to bear fruit.

In the midst of her joys she thought much of that Mission Board meeting and tried to interest her Catholic friends to do some real work for missions, but it was all in vain, for priests, nuns and laity had too much to do at home to be concerned with the heathen. *" Feed my sheep,"* seemed to be a local command. Each shepherd had his own flock and would not see beyond the fold.

Yet the missions called insistently to Agatha Lambert, and grace to answer was not wanting. To the horror and amazement of all, she quitted the life she had made so bright and had so loved, to join, in Europe, an order of foreign mission nuns, because in her native land none was to be found.

* * * * * * *

It was a time of famine in India. The land was parched and dry, and hunger, suffering, and

fever desolated the district which a few months before had given promise of a luxurious harvest.

A little group of Sisters who had labored there for ten years in one of the poorest missions, was reduced to absolute want, the more keenly felt because the sick and the little ones whom they had adopted were dying for lack of nourishment, and souls they might have saved with a few grains of rice were being turned away daily. Two of their own number had already died.

Agatha Lambert was in this group of nuns. She had gone the whole way for souls.

It was her feast day and after Mass she had walked up to the clearing back of the convent to oversee the making of some adobe bricks, to be used, when times should be better, for a dry, clean chapel, a decent class-room and a sunny room for the sick. For ten years she had tried to secure this much-needed addition and to-day, although peace was deep in her heart, she felt the impossibility of it all. Her strength was almost gone, and her companions dying.

Would relief never come? For the moment her courage was low, her heart sick. But at the sight of a weary Sister coming towards her, Mother Agatha's face lighted with her ever-ready cheer, and she laughed outright when the Sister

PALEM.

(Photograph sent by Fr. Aelen, Madras, India)

announced, "There's a present for you below. It came with this note. Three guesses!" Her thoughts flew back to the childhood days when three guesses meant a real Paris doll, a jewelled ring or boxes of sweets. So she made all three and then "gave up."

The Sister handed her a crumpled note. She opened it and read:

"*Palem* remembers your feast day. She is very unhappy and no one loves her. She does not forget to pray. She gives you her only girl, her baby. Keep her forever. Make her one of Mary's children. Her name is *Palem*, too."

She read the note again and mused.

Her feast day! Famine, hunger everywhere! Such a gift! Another mouth to feed, and there was not enough to go round now!

Mother Agatha looked beyond the hills toward the land of plenty she had left, and then down into the valley where she could see the starving children lying listlessly about. What could she do!

She recalled *Palem*, a sweet orphaned child beloved by all, who had wished to stay with them always. But like most Hindu girls the little one had been betrothed and at fourteen had been claimed by the seventeen-year-old groom, who

would not release her. That was five years ago. In the atmosphere of idolatry she had kept her faith sweet and her heart close to Mary! And now Palem's child was waiting in the valley below.

Quickly Mother Agatha went down the hill, giving a kindly word, a soothing pat to the suffering ones about her. Inside the house, on a table, lay her feast day gift—a little, brown bit of a thing, laughing and cooing as if all was well with the world. A ray of hope—the promise of better things, the babe seemed, and for the moment hunger, toil and care were forgotten.

Mother Agatha took the child in her arms, carried it to the altar and presented it as Mary had Jesus, to God. He would provide.

That night the rains fell; a cry of relief went up through the land, sleep came, and God's peace held the little community in its loving embrace.

Mother Agatha smiled. She saw a vision of her own land in its luxury and comfort—a land where there is no dread of awful famine, no fear of pestilence. She saw the pitying smile her friends had given her as she left them so long ago. And she prayed from her grateful

heart that God would reveal to them as He had to her His universal love for souls.

She took another peep at the babe (*Theodora* —gift of God—she would call her) and then, exhausted, fell asleep with the divine promise ringing in her ears: *"In as much as ye do it unto the least of these, my little ones, ye do it unto me."*

THE YOUNG FISHERMAN.

By Fr. John Wakefield.

THE end of June, the dream-days of every school-boy, had come and gone, and Carl Hoffman was out fishing, "thinking it over."

His diploma entitling him to enter the High School of St. Boniface College had been shown to the family, as also to some neighbors and to the visiting relatives. Carl had then tied the crumpled blue ribbon about the roll and tucked the document away into a drawer, for that framing day that usually never dawns.

And now, the boy sat on the river-bank, with his bare, brown legs dangling in the water and a fishing pole held tight in his two plump hands—for Carl was no puny youth.

He had stolen away from the house to be "all alone by his lonesome," because something had happened.

It was nothing that concerned anybody just

now except himself, and that was the very reason why he didn't want to take even his chum, Joe Shea, along with him on this excursion.

It was like this. The day before Carl had gone down to the village on an errand and at the post-office had met Michael O'Kane, who had been away for a whole year, studying in some kind of missionary college, about which no one seemed to know anything.

Carl was naturally inquisitive, and besides, he had a strong liking for this big, manly chap, who was almost two years older than himself. He began to ask questions, and finally both boys became so interested that they went over to the Common to sit on a bench and talk. The result was that each reached home late, and Carl quite upset his household because his mother had to wait for his return before she could serve the supper. He had not been met with a smile, but that was last night and now the storm had passed.

This morning everybody was in good humor. Carl had finished his chores early and now, with his head full of ideas from Michael O'Kane, he was "chewing the cud" as contentedly as any of his father's cows lying in the pasture through which he had just come.

"So that's what he's studying for,—to be a priest over in Asia. I thought he'd be a priest, and I was going to follow him, but this Asia business is a new one on me.

"I'd like to cross the ocean all right, and it wouldn't bother me much whether it was the Atlantic or the Pacific. But to stay there 'for keeps,' away from the folks,—I never dreamed of that."

The boy stopped his musings.

There was a gentle twitching at the line, and he saw nothing in the world just then but the rippled water a few feet away.

Slowly he let out his line, for he had "felt a bass" and was quite ready to let it swallow the bait and make off with it leisurely.

Then the reel began to unwind itself more and more rapidly. The boy's face grew suddenly tense, and pressing his fingers on the line against his pole, with an upward sweep of his arm he "snubbed" the fish and the fight was on.

It was a good fight, for the bass was no baby. Occasionally it jumped clear of the water, to snap, if possible, the line that held it. Then it darted away with such strength that Carl was obliged to let out line several times before he

ST. MICHAEL'S COTTAGE AT MARYKNOLL.

could tire the fish sufficiently to get it near the bank.

When this was accomplished, the boy reached for a net, and skilfully enclosing the bass, lifted it to the bank and unhooked it, dropping it on the grass beside him.

Carl baited his hook again, threw his line in the same place, and in a few moments was deep in the subject of Michael O'Kane's relations to Asia and to himself, Carl Hoffman, recent graduate.

There was another nibble.

"It's great sport, after all," the boy said to himself. "I don't know but I'd like to spend my life fishing. . . . 'Fishing for a living,'—it sounds like loafing for a living. But then some pretty good people were fishermen. There was St. Peter—."

And he remembered Fr. Barry's sermon of the Sunday before. It was all about fishing. Our Lord was standing by the lake, then He went into Peter's boat, and told Peter to "launch out into the deep" and let down the nets. And the net broke with all the fishes that it brought up. Then Our Lord told Peter not to be afraid, because after this he would be catching men.

"Well, I think I'd rather catch men as St. Peter did," the boy thought to himself, "than stick around a lake all my life. I could do some good if I tried to save souls,"—and Carl liked this thought of his future.

"But where should I go?" A line creased the manly little brow. Young as he was, he would demand an answer. Every boy had some special vocation, he had been told, and God would make it known. But he remembered too that he should pray. And there on the bank, still holding his rod, he said a fervent *Our Father* and added a *Hail Mary,* because he was fond of the Blessed Virgin, and was in the habit of going to her as to his Mother.

When he had finished, he waited to hear some voice direct him, but there was no sound except the gentle splash of the river flowing over the rocks at his feet.

"Where shall I fish for men? Here in some brooks of my native State?"

The wrinkle in his forehead had disappeared, and he was humming a tune that he had learned at the Church, a hymn to Our Lady of Good Counsel. The refrain seemed to comfort him.

"Mother, tell me, what am I to do?"

He had resumed his hold on the pole mechan-

ically, but now he reeled up, examined his bait, deftly looped his line, and cast well towards the opposite bank.

As he did so, the words of Our Lord to Peter escaped his lips—*Launch out into the deep.*

His hook had caught in some weeds and it was with difficulty that he extricated it, but he did not mind. Something told him that he had just found the answer to his prayer. He should "launch out into the deep." Beyond the oceans were millions whom the net of Christ had never circled, and some one must go to them. Why not he? *"Launch out into the deep."*

Carl went home to dinner with these words ringing in his ears and his imagination running riot. But he spoke to no one of his desire until the following Saturday, when he met Fr. Barry in the confessional.

The earnest priest was disposed to make light of the boy's hastily conceived purpose, but urged him to pray hard and go to Communion daily.

Carl managed to meet Michael O'Kane frequently, and the subject uppermost in both minds never failed to receive its share of attention. Carl secured much information, but did not let

Michael into his secret until September, and then only after he had spoken to his father.

This happened on Labor Day, when Mr. Hoffman and Carl were fishing together. The boy told his story so frankly that the father could not object. But both lost interest in their pastime, and it was not until the next Sunday that Mr. Hoffman could see his way to discuss the matter with his wife. Then, however, he was able to assure the boy that both were willing to make the sacrifice for him, and thus enable him to make the sacrifice for God and for souls.

So it came about that Carl left the next week with Michael O'Kane for the Apostolic School, which would prepare him to enter the Foreign Mission Seminary and later to be a fisher of men, beyond the ocean.

IN A GARDEN.

By Mary J. Rogers.

IN a great, low, rambling house, lying in a nook among the hills of far away China, lived little White Flower. One spring day the gentle breezes called to her to come out in the sunshine and play, but she did not heed them, for, seated on a low stool before a golden idol, she was repeating for the tenth time this offering to the great god of China—

Confucius! Confucius!
Great indeed art thou, O Confucius!
Before thee
None like unto thee;
After thee
None equal to thee;
Confucius! Confucius!
Great art thou, O Confucius!

It was a hard penance for the child, especially when she didn't understand what it was all about,

and the tired head dropped between restless hands and the soft brown eyes closed.

Only a few hours before, her father, a wealthy Chinese merchant, returning from his office, had found her alone on the street walking in the direction of the city.

Now you must know that girls of the well-to-do class in China do not go about freely as you do. They are like caged birds, the walls of their gardens shutting them in from the noise and roughness of the world without. Though she had never before been outside her own wonderful garden alone, White Flower was far more fortunate than most of her Chinese sisters. She was an only child and motherless, and Mr. Wang, a man of keen intelligence, bestowed on his daughter an unusual affection—for girls are not very popular in China. Her feet had not been bound; he himself had taught her to read; and it was his pleasure to adorn her with the daintiest of garments and ornaments. This affection was lavishly returned and though only fourteen and very small for her age, White Flower had already begun to be mistress of the home.

Is it any wonder that Mr. Wang fairly snatched the little one in his great, strong arms

and hurried into the courtyard of his house, fearful lest the same evil spirit that had led her beyond the walls would take her from him again!

There in the garden the story was soon told. She had meant no wrong. Thérèse, the nurse who had been like a mother to her, had told wonderful stories of a little child called Jesus, the Son of the One true God, and of Mary, His Mother.

"Thérèse says Jesus is everywhere," sobbed the child. "I have hunted for Him day after day in my garden, and this morning, when the great white lily opened and he was not there, I thought I must seek Him outside."

The merchant's face darkened and angry words rose to his lips. He, too, had heard of this Jesus. Had not his fathers, whom he worshipped daily, persecuted the followers of Christ! Did not this Jesus teach that the gods of China are false, and try to set up His own image in the temples! And to think that his child—his White Flower—had even gone in search of the despised deity! After all, the child was not to blame. She was young and only a girl and he had not bothered to instruct her in religious matters. The strange fancy would soon pass, the very fact that she

had not found Jesus being the best argument that Thérèse had lied to her.

Thérèse! How he hated the name! She was the evil spirit of the house! Why had he not asked about her religion when she came to them at his wife's death, through a friend at the French legation, instead of accepting her queer foreign name without question? His anger rose again. Thérèse was a traitor. She had brought the wrath of the gods on his house. How he would make her suffer!

Terrified by her father's strange mood, White Flower had fled to her room to read the offering of Confucius as he had ordered, while he set out to make peace, if possible, with his gods.

Unconscious of the confusion her story created in the house, the child slept on and dreamed. A happy smile played over the gentle face and her arms were outstretched when a familiar gentle tapping awakened her.

"Oh, Thérèse!" she cried, running to meet the nurse, "Mary has just brought Jesus to me! She placed Him in my arms and—"

The joyous voice was hushed. There was no answering smile on the loved face. It was pale and drawn with suffering.

"Are you ill, my Thérèse? What has happened?"

With difficulty the old nurse bared her shoulders and showed the bruised flesh and cruel marks of the angry blows. Then she spoke hurriedly, for the visit was a stolen one. "They have flogged me for loving Christ and teaching His word, even as He was scourged for love of you and me. Do not be angry with your father. He does not understand, nor does he know that it is sweet to suffer for Christ. But my heart is heavy, for I must leave you to others, who will try to teach you the religion of your house. Do not forget what I have told you. Mary will be your mother now and if you pray to her she will watch over you. Wear this in her honor." She placed a medal about the child's neck, and with a whispered blessing disappeared.

It was only then that White Flower grasped the meaning of the words. Thérèse who loved her and had cared for her, had been beaten and sent away. She rushed to the window to call her back, but it was too late. In the deepening twilight she watched the faithful friend slowly and painfully wend her way through the winding, flower-bordered path.

Out of the darkness a great light came and

filled the soul of this chosen child. She *loved* Christ! She could not recall the time when he had not been her playmate as she roved through the garden. Together they had found the first spring flowers; together they watched the birds and butterflies come and go. Her pure, childish heart had unknowingly become a living temple for the Divine Infant, whose suffering she was just beginning to share.

The odor of incense and the drowsy chant of voices filled the house.

Without a thought of the convention which forbids a Chinese girl to appear before men unless at her parent's wish, White Flower ran to the great room where her father and several priests from the temple were worshipping at the feet of a great bronze statue veiled in clouds of incense. They were making offerings to the jealous gods and purifying the house from the stain which the Christian Thérèse had brought upon it.

All eyes turned on her as she reverently bowed before her father. Strengthened by an unseen power she arose and fearlessly reproached them all for their merciless treatment of Thérèse, and added simply, " My God would never have let you be so cruel. You have sent Thérèse

away, but you cannot take Him." She went back quickly to her room to weep for Thérèse and to wonder if her father, who had always been so gentle and kind, would beat her, too, for loving Christ. She was very much afraid, for she was only a child, and the sleep which finally came was troubled and restless.

The pagan priests were not displeased at the child's outbreak. It would mean much work and compensation for them. Mr. Wang, however, was overcome with anger and surprise. Could this outspoken, rebellious child be the shy, modest little daughter he had sheltered so carefully! Why had this evil fallen on him! Her *God!* His child a follower of *Christ!* Never! Rather would he see her dead a thousand times! Something must be done immediately. The priests were anxious to have her given to the temple of Confucius to help with the worship offered to idols and thus atone for her sins. A happier thought and one which settled all doubts in the father's mind was to hasten the child's marriage.

According to Chinese custom, Mr. Wang had promised White Flower when she was a baby, to the son of a neighboring mandarin. The fact that she had never seen him made no difference

at all. Once married, she would follow her husband's will, and the interests of her new life would crowd out this Christian nonsense. With a light heart he made known his wish, and preparations for the wedding began.

Every day articles for her trousseau came—beautiful embroidered dresses of bright satin and silk, wonderfully exquisite little shoes, jewels, gold and silver finger rings, bracelets and ornaments that would have delighted the heart of any girl. And there were great red boxes in which the finery would be taken to her new home.

Always obedient, White Flower accepted her father's decision without a murmur. It was the way every proper Chinese girl is married. Why did her whole being turn against it? Over and over she repeated the little prayers Thérèse had taught her, and begged Mary, her mother, to save her from something she did not understand but feared. Idly she looked over her pretty clothes. Her thoughts were far away. Only the brown eyes full of pleading and grief told of the tumult in her soul.

* * * * * * *

Not once did she fail in her duty. Every day as the gate swung open she was there to meet her father, but no longer was she his "butterfly," his

"It was like a wild garden in fairy-land."

"humming-bird," flitting through the garden happy and care-free as they. The change made his heart sad. The doctors said she grieved for Thérèse, but to have *her* back meant the return of the old influence. Torn between love for his child and what he considered duty towards his religion, Mr. Wang tried to content himself with the belief that the wedding would make everything right.

At last there came a day when she was not at the gate. He found her pale and weak on her little cot, and a glance at the frail body and the spiritual face told him that there would be no wedding. Tenderly he carried her into the garden where great wild roses, crimson azaleas and bushes of red fire burned among ferns and green branches, and swallow-tailed butterflies whirled over the flowers and under the tree-tops. It was like a wild garden in fairyland and White Flower was happy to be there so snug and comfortable in her father's arms.

And then the best thing of all happened. It had hurt her to displease her father and she had prayed very hard that in some way he would come to know why she loved the God he hated. She was sure that if he once knew about Jesus he would love Him too, and there would be no

more misunderstanding, and she would never have to go away to a strange house, but would stay with him and be his little girl forever. All the weariness vanished and the gladness of the old days came back as he said, with love in his voice:

"Tell me, my little Flower, of this strange God who is calling you away from me." It was the answer to her prayer, and in her sweet way, with the faith of childhood, she told him the stories Thérèse had taught her, of the joys and sorrows of Jesus and Mary.

This was the first of many happy days in the great garden, and the old tales were repeated again and again. Was the light beginning to break for Mr. Wang? Certainly this Christ was not as he had imagined; His teachings were gentle and just and He had suffered much because He loved all men.

But the summer days did not bring health to the sick child, and when the fifteenth of August came, in despair and sorrow Mr. Wang set out to find Thérèse in the hope that she might save his treasure. It was Mary who led the old nurse, wholly ignorant of White Flower's condition, to the garden gate, confident that on this great feast day she would in some way see the child for

whom her heart longed. How happy Mr. Wang was to find her at his very door, sure that she would succeed where the others had failed. But this was not God's plan.

As they went along he told her the whole story, blaming himself for all that had happened. The moment they entered the room Thérèse saw that White Flower was fast fading, that the end was near.

"I knew you would come," the child murmured. The poor father stood apart, alone in his grief, for he could not share the joy of these gentle souls as the faithful nurse poured the waters of baptism on the weary little head.

"Father," the happy child called. He bent low over her. "I shall be waiting for you. Thérèse will show you the way."

"I will try to follow," he answered.

And like incense the fragrance of roses and honeysuckle filled the room as this pure soul went to its Maker.

Mr. Wang kept his word. He was instructed by a missioner who had the joy of receiving him and his entire household into the true fold.

China is a great garden rich with souls as lovely as this little Flower's. God wants them all and He has left the task of gathering them

to you and to me. We can help with our prayers and alms those whom He calls to this work, and if we pray hard enough, He may even give us the grace to harvest with our own hands these flowers in fields afar.

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